

Pedagogy in (E)Motion

EXPLORATIONS OF EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE

Volume 16

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In today's dominant modes of pedagogy, questions about issues of race, class, gender, sexuality, colonialism, religion, and other social dynamics are rarely asked. Questions about the social spaces where pedagogy takes place – in schools, media, and corporate think tanks – are not raised. And they need to be.

The *Explorations of Educational Purpose* book series can help establish a renewed interest in such questions and their centrality in the larger study of education and the preparation of teachers and other educational professionals. The editors of this series feel that education matters and that the world is in need of a rethinking of education and educational purpose.

Coming from a critical pedagogical orientation, *Explorations of Educational Purpose* aims to have the study of education transcend the trivialization that often degrades it. Rather than be content with the frivolous, scholarly lax forms of teacher education and weak teaching prevailing in the world today, we should work towards education that truly takes the unattained potential of human beings as its starting point. The series will present studies of all dimensions of education and offer alternatives. The ultimate aim of the series is to create new possibilities for people around the world who suffer under the current design of socio-political and educational institutions.

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Nellie J. Zambrana-Ortiz

Pedagogy in (E)Motion

Rethinking Spaces and Relations

 Springer

Prof. Nellie J. Zambrana-Ortiz
University of Puerto Rico
College of Education
PO Box 23079
00931-3079 San Juan
UPR Station
USA
jauranela@yahoo.es

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Chapter 1

Pedagogy in (E)Motion: Bridges Across Cognition, Cultural Mediation, and Sociopolitical Action

...you can't separate intellect and feelings in the work of the mind. They're both there all the time. Real learning—attentive real learning, deep learning—is playful and frustrating and joyful and discouraging and exciting and sociable and private all at the same time, which is what makes it great.

Eleanor Duckworth (in Hatton, 2005, p. 21)

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A widely known educator whose work and practices have been devoted to the topic of writing and reading in elementary levels, and cofounder of the whole language approach. I learned with her to read stories in my college classroom.

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Authentic Learning Is a Crossover of Emotions

Eleanor Duckworth’s words have invited hundreds of educators including myself to enjoy the risk of having wonderful ideas. What makes learning a journey of risky fun? I can remember, with particular clarity, some of my journeys of risky fun and learning in some of those experiences; the butterfly feelings in the stomach, the tension, and the anticipation that would end in a great feeling of accomplishment. Yet these experiences also felt like roller-coaster rides. It could be that these experiences became a kind of metaphor for the intersection between emotions and the actual physical and cognitive movements that these emotions provoke in us. The great Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire (2005, 1993, 1998) always maintained that we are educators when we recognize that we must teach with both our hearts and minds. In education, as in life, we are actors who bring our hearts and souls to our work. Within a plot, we share the space with other characters in the scenario, which may or may not change, depending on the intention of the writer. As with the roller-coaster ride, we are there experiencing emotions that we sometimes cannot name. Located within the plot, we are never a mere audience; we are performers giving life-interpreting meaning to the context as a whole. For educators, the script and context combine both challenges and aspirations to continually make sense and interpret our work. Educators, acting like performers in their classrooms must collect and evaluate their works in terms of a commitment with a constant reinvention of pedagogical practices, of critical questioning, of differences that arise, of different ways of understanding the learning process, of what might be considered small conquests in an effort to teach and learn, and of the negotiation that takes place throughout. From the point of view of a learner, a gain could be understood as that connection, explained or pending, between concepts, a moment of assertion, a minute of debate, a moment of doubt or enlightenment, everything counts! All experiences make possible an expansion of what is to what might be (to more), or untapped ideas that can connect our critical being to content in order to problematize it. Here, the emotions find their common scenario with thought. Fear, joy, acceptance, disgust, surprise, anger, anticipation, and sorrow: all basic emotions are embedded in our biological and cultural nature. Emotions color our ideas, move the reason, and stretch cognition.

Drawing on the tenuous yet suggestive relationship between the act of teaching and the openly and asserted projections of a performer, the uncommitted performer seems to sense an accomplishment of their work once the curtain is dropped; but the committed performers insist on the artful-political-social development of their project, reinventing themselves within the context of what is felt in and across different fields and places. I feel comfortable with the metaphor of performer for the simple reason that we may not be as close to our students if we do not prepare effectively, affectively, and cognitively to *perform* in a moving pedagogy that can provoke

the audience to share in an emotional sense. I can recall some of the remarks made by renowned educator Yetta Goodman.¹ In an interview for the book titled *Teaching by Heart* (Hatton, 2005) she said that in her early experiences, as an educator, she referred to herself as a performer in a negative sense feeling she was engaging in and with the classroom for the sake of entertainment. Of course, such an important discovery was indeed an indication of her own role as a critic or spectator cognizant of her own emotional status. Her emotions had triggered a cognitive dissonance and valid doubts about her role. She said that even when some students responded well, others would gain little if anything from the experience. She decided to move from her center, from her own comfort zones as a performer and opted to navigate into the spaces that would showcase the students. Here I need to highlight the importance of the concept “context,” since I propose to make clear the relationship of movement to emotions. Etymologically, the word has a *text* that is not expressed in a concrete sense, but is nevertheless present. In other words, it is conveyed to someone somewhere at some point in time. The text is thus embedded in a time–space continuum called context, wherein our human processes are imagined, realized, and actualized, where and when we invent and reinvent ourselves and our world from within and without.

By the same token, bell hooks affirms in her book, *Teaching to Transgress* (1994), that teaching is a performative act. And I have to agree with her given that it has been my own experience in the classroom and other pedagogical settings. Performance is that aspect of our work that offers the space for change, invention, improvisation, and even good and thoughtful planning. To embrace the formative aspect of teaching it means that we are compelled to engage many and diverse audiences to consider ideas, issues, and proposals of reciprocity. We need each other; we need to resist the enchantment of the lights and the special effects. In other words, our job is not to amaze other senses, but to shake their senses and to move not to entertain in a banking-like (see Paulo Freire on the “banking” notion of educating) fashion. A delicate balance must be struck between a performance that engages and one that shadows. What is education, if not the art of making movement so others can engage at our invitation to participate and to be?

As educators, we can promote enthusiasm for knowledge and learning. We can design a pedagogical practice of ludic and reflective activities. While participating in a 10-day workshop held in Tucson, Arizona, in 1992, on the topic of language and sociocultural approaches, I was moved yet again by Yetta Goodman. Again she infused her conferences with the literature and authentic narratives of children. And yet, as great as the memories of those conferences are, they also represent transformations in the political and social influences of the educational position that I decided to pursue. We cannot be ingenuous about our place in front of others’ ideas and their effect on us. As teachers we have power and, as such, a clear challenge to a work alongside, to work with. One of these challenges is clearly the institutional and personal hierarchy that comes with our own functions as educators. This may actually represent one of the biggest challenges to any of us in higher education. From a more positive perspective, I can assume a more experienced and nurturing position in the process of generating knowledge, but this is in no way my own nor exclusive role. Day in and day out the committed educator demonstrates and works with

her audiences in the socio-emotional conditions that promote a respectful climate for discussions and debates such that unexpected “truths” can be revealed. Actually, when I engage in daily discussions with my students about their struggles, the anecdotes, and their stories, I can identify those silent spaces in the deep emotions, pauses were other “lineal” educators might resist and succumb to only that which lies at the surface; the simplistic and oversimplified cognition and recognition of the obvious, shrugging off any deeper understanding and learning. Again, thought and reason meet with emotions and feelings.

This is precisely the difference between a pedagogy in (e)motion and a rational lineal pedagogy: the recognition of the intersection of reason and emotion, where such a dualism reveals the fundamental necessity to reconsider this distinction. Actually, throughout this essay I will defend the position that the dualism reason and emotion is a mistaken one. I will, on the other hand, assert that in the dissolution of such a dualism, we will discover a new way of knowing and understanding that takes into account both the contexts and emotional aspects of human cognition. Indeed, how can it be possible that we not include our emotions in the cognitive realm if, in fact, processing of emotional information is mediated by pathways and neural structures that are involved in intellectual processes such as decision making and problem solving (Álvarez, 2006; Le Doux, 1996, 2000) and in creative solutions (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996)? Maybe the reason is because we have underestimated the value of emotions in deep learning.

Why to Engage in Pedagogy with Emotions in Mind and Body

Emotions are related to body as well as mind. There is no cognition without emotions, or emotions outside the limits of a cognitive experience, and progressive explanations of human learning and development must take into consideration the fusion of both. To engage in a pedagogy in (e)motion, I propose to transact with the consequences of attempting risky maneuvers: to trust our intuition, to consider the analysis of our behavior in connection with our emotions, and to problematize facts. It is important to know that our behavior has historical and cultural roots as it also implies the highest of mental functions, composed of complicated internal processes. Those internal processes include the complex and yet primary mechanisms of emotions. Antonio Damasio, a prolific neurobiologist and author of many books on this particular subject, has discovered that the emotions are essential to the decision-making process since they are the engine of the limbic system—our emotional brain which is connected to learning and motivation. Emotions are needed to make simple decisions such as how to dress or what to wear and how to execute complex activities such as the making of critical judgments. These wide ranges of behaviors and actions are possible due to the cultural nature of our life as social beings. In this line of thought, Damasio (1994), in *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain*, points out that our emotions are triggered only after an evaluative, voluntary mental process, not automatic mental process. In the following quote, he expresses the relation of emotions and the evaluation processes:

Because of the nature of our experience, a broad range of stimuli and situations has become associated with those stimuli which are innately set to cause emotions. The reaction to that broad range of stimuli and situations can be filtered by an interposed mindful evaluation. And because of the thoughtful, evaluative, filtering process, there is room for variation in the extent and intensity of preset emotional patterns. (p. 130)

In other words, in spite of our personal interpretations of the experience and the more complex social organization in our lives and communities, the basic map of the machinery of the emotions has been transformed. The more we interpret the more we interpose our cultural and political selves to multiply and expand the emotional mapping. Emotions have been the topic of many psychologists, scientists, and philosophers. From the first published articles of William James in 1884,² to Robert Plutchick (2001), emotions have been related heavily to body reactions as well as mind states. From James's primer map of fear, love, rage, and grief there is an expanded version that includes sadness, joy, fear, acceptance, anger, disgust, surprise, and anticipation. There is a remarkable body of knowledge in the field of emotions and the disciplines that cross over them, extensive enough to fill some books. Moreover, from the interpretative standpoint, as much language and cultural tools are embedded in our constructions of meaning the more words we will have to name those meanings related to feeling and affective moods, situations, and stimuli. What is important to the concept of pedagogy in (e)motion is to establish the importance of avoiding boundaries between teaching, thinking, and feeling.

Our emotions have very important functions in our lives, more than just help us to adapt to new situations and protect ourselves by provoking nexus between events and body states. The emotional response can accomplish some useful goals when we are feeling our emotions because we become entirely conscious of it. The moment we become conscious of emotions we have the flexibility of response based on the particular history of our interactions with the world; means as environments, human landscaping, and contexts. Damasio (1994) states: "although you need innate (natural mechanisms) devices to start the ball of knowledge (interpretation) rolling; feelings offer you something extra." (p. 133). That something extra is what I call *stamina*, given by a feeling-thinking cultural brain.

Lev Vygotsky, the designer of the now-acclaimed culture and sociohistorical approach in psychology, and in my point of view, the architect of a radical and critical psychology, was aware of the theoretical transgressions of his investigations as well as the limitations of the explanation of the superior thinking processes (a very researched topic in psychology) without the emotion component. In all senses, the psychological exploration leads to the problem of motivation, as Alex Kozulin—a Russian specialist in Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and the theory of mediated learning experience—says on the prologue of *Language and Thought*, 1996 (edition he edited). As he reviewed, one of the latest masterpieces of Vygotsky that remained unfinished for some years was the one which approached the problem with emotions. Kozulin indicates:

The first part of that masterpiece was titled *The Study of Emotions: A historic-psychological research* (started in 1926, finished in 1933, and published in the

English language in 1984). In this book, Vygotsky returned to the problem he discussed in *The historical meaning of the psychology crisis* (1926, about the “gravitational” phenomenon between the naturalistic and the idealist explanation. This makes us reflect on how the fields of emotions, feelings and motivation to produce higher level thought were divided epistemologically. In *The Study of Emotions*, Vygotsky demonstrates that there are not such similarities among James-Lange theory and Spinoza’s concept of passion. He supports that, contrary to Descartes (the authentic precursor of James-Lange theory), Spinoza was looking for a synthetic concept of emotion in order to eliminate Cartesian dualism. In this point, Vygotsky demonstrated how the dualistic approach from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries was dividing or polarizing psychology, in mechanistic naturalism and metaphysical idealism. (pp. 29–30, *free translation by the author*)

The systemic complexity of the human organism, and its meaning for the study of the affective processes were fundamental for Vygotsky’s dialectical position of his explanation of mental or psychic functions. Vygotsky, in the ’30 s, was staring from the future in an attempt to track and explain the wholeness of the spiritual (body and mind) nature of human beings. The old epistemological challenge brings back the wide topic of emotions as to be discussed in the education and psychology fields in order to reconstruct and deconstruct the explanations of the thinking processes, their influence in learning scenarios and the understanding of human development.

Cognition Without Emotions Is a Limited Construct

Cognitive psychology has occupied itself with the study of processes by which persons perceive, learn, remember, and think with respect to the information at hand. However, from my perspective, the recognition of emotions has been quite absent or at best silenced in the literature on our higher levels of cognitive constructions. Such inclusion is considered a hybrid science because its origin and development are linked to philosophy, physiology, the engineering of computers, linguistics, and anthropology. The very fact of recognizing linguistics, physiology, and anthropology should alert us about the emotions and their prominent role within the three disciplines. The physiology of human beings integrates sensations and moves the nervous systems; linguistics explores the underlying meanings and manifestations of the symbolic production and recognizes expressions, inventions, and emotional tendencies in the use of linguistic manifestation; anthropology studies our sociocultural history in which the emotions are expressed through art, customs, and historical legacy.

The history of what today is known as the sciences and technologies of cognition demonstrates a movement toward greater complexity. I can affirm that this search for complexity has taken us to the unfolding of new areas of study such as cognitive-evolutionary neuroscience. It is precisely this that has advanced greatly the detection of emotions as an important axis in the production of knowledge. The neurosciences have explicitly accepted the importance of emotions in our brain functions. Interestingly, Rodríguez Arocho (2006) citing Wertsch indicates that research “has not been able to determine conclusively what executive cognitive functions are, but

he (*Wertsch*) is painfully conscious of their presence when there is a dislocation in their operations.” The acceptance of pain, for example, in the language of cognitive discourses alerts us to the presence of the emotional dimension in the symbolic representation of language, in spite of being relegated to an explanation of intelligent production. In an analysis of the history of the concept of executive functions and its measurement, many psychologists conclude that there seems to be a common theme in these definitions that permits us to visualize these functions as a conglomerate of skills. They are necessary for the effectivity and efficiency of future-oriented conduct, as in the conduct that engages the child’s idea to reach a toy, or the elaboration of final arguments on the part of a legal defense team. What is central for the definition of executive functions are the ability to plan, inhibit conduct, monitoring, and flexibility requiring a broad gamut of processes that are emotionally “colored” like attention, perception, memory, and language. The essence of the executive function is its relationship to basic coordinate processes for a specific purpose: directing an activity toward a goal. The coordination and control of these processes justifies the use of the term executive, but the intentionality for the action requires the concept of emotion.

Could it be here, in the center of executions that emotion is inserted with urgent messages and movement in order to arrive at valuative states, of judgment, of reasoning and planning? In organizational terms, the executive exercises a directive function and assigns the resources for the realization of operations mediated by the memories, and these are at once also embedded with emotions. The realization of tasks in the solution of problems depends on this assignment. Given that the capacity for the solution of problems is a characteristic that psychology traditionally has accepted as definitional of intelligence, the actual work related to executive functions and cognitive processes compels us toward a revision of this concept. In their work, *From the psychology of drama to the drama of psychology: the relationship between the life and work of Lev. S. Vygotsky*, Amelia Alvarez and Pablo del Río analyzed beautifully the Vygotsky’s work. Their paper suggests the existence of a strong, deep, and dialectical link between his life and his work, in a way that connects his mind-emotional insights to his interpretations of psychology. The following quote from Alvarez and del Río exemplifies how the theorist takes into account the emotions:

Beyond the grand general mechanism of mediation that regulates as much the functions of knowledge as those of direction, the model of the human mind would be for him, Vygotsky, “concrete,” within the realm of resources with which humanity has served itself since the beginning of its existence in order to direct itself with respect to the meaning of life. The animist mentality, the religious, the tragic sentiments of life, the scientific theories inasmuch as they pretend to prescribe to the individual person a recipe to guide his own life. . . would constitute the armor against which the cycle of cultural mechanisms (psycho-technical mediations) of emotions and action operate (2007, p. 311).

As explained earlier, emotions are part of psycho-cultural mechanisms that may move the executive functions of planning, inhibition, monitoring, and flexibility. Although the concept of emotion is absent—at least explicitly so—in Wertsch and Rodríguez’s interpretations, the implication of language in the pursuing of a goal makes the whole experience an emotive and affective one. According to Welsh, the

essence of the executive function resides in that it is a question of basic processes coordinated for a specific intention: to direct the activity toward a goal. This requires emotion and motion. The accomplishment of tasks and the solution of problems depend on this assignment. Provided that the capacity for the solution of problems is a characteristic that psychology traditionally has accepted akin to a definition of intelligence, the current work on executive functions and cognitive processes motivates us to review this concept in order to recognize the important role of emotions in the interpretation of cognition.

The Construct When Deconstructed: More Space for Interpretation and Political Action

The word *emotion* derives from the Latin *emotio*³ and means movement, a motor expression through verbal or bodily acts and behaviors. Plutchick conceptualized emotions as an essential part of what we are and why we perpetuate ourselves as humans. I also believe that our emotions are responsible for our pertinence in history and culture. Damasio (1994) claims emotions as part of what we have called human cognition, human production, and the construction of thinking. Interestingly, Plutchick pointed out that the last century generated as many as 90 definitions of emotions given the theoretical approach used to categorize them, but even before, Spinoza, on the seventeenth century, had a progressive idea of the importance of emotions in thought. From Darwinian evolution, Freudian psychodynamics, the psycho-physiological approach of William James, and the neurological approach proposed by Walter Cannon, they have together raised many ideas based on a variety of questions about controlled experiments, systematic naturalistic observations, images from high brain technology, and clinical interpretations of human manifestations.

Surprisingly, as much as we have to interpret human physical and subjective experience, the agreement among some of these and other specialists is significant in terms of giving to emotions a great role in human development. Every thought we have is related to our emotions and our emotions use cognitive systems for any analysis as well as the resulting action of the analysis. Thus, a feedback mechanism between emotions, thought, and action is forged. Emotions are a basic component of cognitive processes and this tenet is at the core of the proposal for a pedagogy in (e)motion: to be impassioned for a reason, and to assert that critical teachers are not politically neutral. Plutchik's (1980) psycho-evolutionary theory of basic emotions allows me to deconstruct the notion of emotions and demonstrate their important role in pedagogy. Emotions have an evolutionary history and have evolved from different forms of expression in different species. Emotions have served as adaptive mechanisms in helping organisms deal with key survival issues posed by the environment. When teaching, emotions can become a means for bringing forth information and the communication that follows in a colorful and constructive fashion. We can see ourselves moving into emotional states that can help us articulate our inner thoughts. This is particularly necessary in a world where the

violent and uncertain dynamics of multiple scenarios in a society with its multiple challenges—biological, health related, demographic, economic, and political—all insist on a constant negotiation in the process of human and social development. Each of these factors influences us in toxic or hopeful ways even though they are organized and synchronized by the ideologies of power. Hence, the adaptations we are constantly making are cultural in nature—conditioned by history, by memories, and by dispositions, revealing before us the critical need for a critical pedagogy in (e)motion and not the tradition of psychological accommodation. In other words, to accommodate may feel good, but it is no longer safe. As I mentioned, we always identify our ideas with a critical system of meaning with all of its allegiances and implications.

We are all at risk of being moved by emotions of rage and this too can be an honorable risk to take. Without emotions we are disconnected artificially from our inner self as well as from our bodies, and from our historical memory. Being emotionally connected is being more conscious of the little and inconspicuous details that bring meaning to a story. Allow me to share an anecdote with you. My family and I were at the Luis Munoz Marin International Airport in San Juan, Puerto Rico, a colonial territory of the United States, passing through a checkpoint. Before us there stood a large, very threatening and rare Star Wars–like machine. Being 7 months pregnant, I immediately stopped. We had heard about this machine in the news, but never thought we would meet it head-on. It is a cold and ominous version of the usual security detection machines; this one sprays the body with a mist. Its purpose is to discover any hidden liquids the person may be carrying. Again, being pregnant my body was quite full of amniotic fluid. Aware of the security concerns but also of my health and that of the baby inside of me, I twice questioned the female officer standing next to the machine if it was completely necessary that I pass through. “It’s harmless,” she said. “I am full of water as you can see. And that thing will sound off,” I responded. Of course, it did. Yet the most threatening thing happened afterward. The security officer’s faced lit up as she reacted to the machine sounding off as I passed through. “I am clueless and astonished” she said. As I turned to her, she turned to a six foot six inch airport security officer who looked at the results of the machine. Another female officer subjected me to a full-body hand check. I was still waiting for someone to talk with me but no one did. When the female security officer completed the search her only discovery was the presence of my big belly. As to my questions she simply referred me to the other officer. In a calm, polite, but firm voice, I asked the security officer in Spanish—the native language in Puerto Rico—if he could explain to me why the machine sounded off. He responded, in English, and with no visual contact: “that is confidential information.” Airport security officials are federal employees. And federal employees work for the U.S. government in Puerto Rico, a colony of the United States. The wearing of a military or security uniform and the speaking of English and in such a context clearly establishes a boundary between the colonized and the colonizer regardless of the fact that as persons we are both Puerto Ricans. Pondering the female officer’s response that I question the male officer in charge, I thought to myself: “This is a way of saying I don’t know the rules and he does and has the power to withhold or reveal any

information.” This is one way people are utilized by the establishment to project control and power through bodily movement and verbal languages.

This is one way in which a pseudo-power, delegated to a particular sector or population of a colonized people, is exercised over other colonized subjects; no answers, no interaction, no eye contact, no personal touch, no consideration, not even an explanation of how it worked! This is the colonial illusion of being powerful, even if only for a few seconds. It was, in my estimation, a classic example of how we become detached as humans, detached from the “other,” and poisoned by the illusion of power, distanced, severing any possibility of a communication with the objective of interpersonal human understanding. The persistence of my questions was my shield, an act of resistance, and simultaneously a demand that we come to terms as equals, as co-collaborators in the process of forging human understanding. In this way, my questions were also political acts against the colonial tradition of passive acceptance and indifference when confronted by the colonizer’s (United States’) impositions. From a critical pedagogical and critical psychological standpoint, to sustain a dialogue or a short personal interaction with the other is a sign of openness, interest, and connection. On the other hand, the detachment I felt and was subjected to could also be transferred to another context; that which occurs in classrooms, schools, universities, communities in public and private agencies; which, given the present state of affairs, need to turn inside and examine how to overcome an environment that is anti-dialogical and thus contrary to the best interests of human development.

Cognition and (E)Motion: Always Together?

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, there is much more agreement in the fact that emotions are linked to cognition in a very positive way. Cognition is not an isolated aspect of our experiences, as we interpret them embedded in our subjectivity. This proposal reminds us that a known thing is lived and interpreted experience. It is part of the living tree of human existence. It is an abstract idea that embraces the effects with their biological and biographical nature. There is no thought without emotion. There is no thought without memory, and the role of consciousness in these is of the utmost importance. When neuroscientists have asserted that consciousness and emotion are inseparable it is because the emotions—in their adaptive function—lead our ideas with movement. Indeed, it is usually the case that when consciousness is impaired so too is emotion. In fact, the connection between emotion and consciousness and between both of these and the body is quite powerful. Taking Damasio’s proposal (2003), complex consciousness is not a simple phenomenon: it is a well-organized system that evolves through the life cycle and changes depending on conventional memory and short memory span, and is enhanced by language. This conscious state is more a characteristic of people since we, in comparison to other animals, make culture and are conscious of it. An individual knows him/herself as being—the self—the entity that transcends, permutes, and reinvents ideas, thoughts, and is capable of feeling sensations from others. Our

biological nature is a re-collection of unique facts, events that characterize and identify us as a person with history and place in the world. The autobiographical self depends on systematized memories' situations in which our consciousness was involved: birthplace, interests, hobbies, problems, issues, behavior, our names, and our past. Our biographical memory is our pillar in life and lives in the physical world. We are lived memory, memory that takes into account the experiences, not static or finite, but dynamic and unfinished. Those memories and experiences related to motivation, interest, and positive or negative intense emotions are crucial in many human activities.

Positive emotions are usually considered as ludic according to some researchers such as Gadanho and Hallam (2001), who point out that the positive emotions have a crucial effect on diverse cognitive processes such as information processing, communication processing, negotiation processing, decision-making processing, and even creative problem solving process. Isen and Baron (1991) summarized that people who are feeling happy are more flexible in their thinking, make associations more easily, are more able to see potential relations among events than other persons in a nonhappy mood. Other findings, using a Broaden-and-Build Model of Positive Emotions (Fredrickson, 1998; Isen, Daubman, & Nowicki, 1987) identified four positive emotions such as joy, interest, contentment, and love, and further suggested that positive emotions broaden the scope of attention, the scope of cognition, and the scope of action. This theory holds that, over time, the broadening triggered by positive emotions builds a range of personal resources, including physical resources (e.g., physical skills, health, longevity), social resources (e.g., friendships, social support networks), intellectual resources (e.g., expert knowledge, intellectual complexity), and psychological resources (e.g., resilience, optimism, creativity). Fredrickson (1998) and Forgas (1998) also found that persons in a positive mood formulated action plans that were more cooperative and integrative, and achieved agreements of higher quality than did neutral or negative mood participants. Meyer and Turner (2002), on their part, focusing on emotions as a motivation source in classrooms, concluded that involvement was socially constructed motivationally and emotionally by providing intrinsic supports, such as bolstering students in feelings of confidence, persevering, developing interest and curiosity, and appreciating mathematics as a tool and language. These findings validate the importance of emotions as a motor for motivation as well as a kind of scaffolding or natural support for thought skills, curiosity, communication, physical and sensorial awareness, and well-being.

Emotions must be understood in the context of the biological, biographical, and anecdotic dimensions of human beings. What we call consciousness is a complex biological organization of our brain which includes working memory, reasoning, conventional memory, and the language which enhances it. According to Damasio's interpretation, the super-sense of extended consciousness brings forth a fully constructed being into the light. The concept of the 'conscious' takes its meaning then from our proposal of the learner's own sense about his/her biographical heritage. Autobiographical memory denotes the organized record, and life documentary of relative aspects of our lives. These memories do not exist in a vacuum but in a

given context with unique characteristics, social historicity, and culture which individuals use and need. This memoirist and biographical material is crucial for our existence and sense of reality. Therefore, emotions assume their important role in how we connect complex or simple ideas, values, principles, and judgments among other activities that cultural beings produce. Human emotion is not just about sexual pleasures or fear of insects. It is also about the horror of witnessing suffering and inequities and about the satisfaction of seeing justice served; about our delight when we hear our national anthem or that special composition by Mozart, in my case I would say Gilberto Santa Rosa—for salsa dance music—and Juan Morell Campos—for classic *danza puertorriqueña*. It is also very important to acknowledge that, from the huge research in the *emotional intelligence* construct—although this chapter is not about this concept in its psychometric dimension—the idea of emotional development includes the understanding of our own and other’s feelings and affective evaluations, the potential to connect to others, learning to manage and understand those feelings, wanting to do so (Goleman, 1995), and the potential to regulate and move actions (Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

The predominant attitude in the modernity paradigm accuses the field of psychology and emotions of being too subjective—as if treatments of topics like interpretation, subjectivity, or any of many references to our inconclusiveness were synonymous with being vague and elusive. Indeed, that which may at one time be vague and elusive may deliver us into the realm of possibilities. Emotions have historically been situated at the opposite end of reason, connoting a perverse twist on the romantic perspective and an incomplete view of our humanity. Such a position could not recognize the legitimacy of emotions as both a vector and an engine for reason itself. More recently, controlled-variable studies (see Meyer & Turner, 2002; Park, 2004) have recognized the importance of emotions in the decision-making process, in common concept developments, and our movement within our ideological formation. Many recent studies thus support my proposal for the development of a pedagogy that takes very seriously the intentional movement and the intentional affect in the learning and teaching process.

The Importance of Revisiting Ourselves

Every day, educators confront the difficult task of dealing with contradictions embedded within the many institutional norms and rules. As critical thinkers, we know that we are in an uncertain field. To promote personal and collective reflection as a learning community, we must build bridges connecting the academic experience to multiple meanings and multiple moments in order to engage with multiple interpretations and assess our work. In my case, I work within the content of disciplines such as psychology, education, and evaluation, moving into the field of critical cognition and critical pedagogy to merge in a critical psychology. Being a critical psychologist and educator is being aware—not just informed—and e-motionally connected with diverse values and interpretations of the world. The purpose of

education concerns a reflection of the intentions that delimit the pedagogical action in the context of the importance that we give to the learning and teaching processes in their axiological, praxeological, and ideological dimensions, and the significance assigned to the different components. This obligates us to engage and commit with a sensitive conception of the human being and society in the psychological, social, anthropological, and philosophical senses.

I believe that you revisit yourself when you speak with others and that space and relationships lay the road to our cultural and political reflection. I have been profoundly inspired and moved by students who have had the courage to confront me and make the classroom a more democratic space, and colleagues as well whose transgressions have made possible a real learning community instead of the traditional boring and predictable³ “assembly-line approach” to learning and teaching. During a conference I offered about my pedagogical practices with educators and colleagues from Costa Rica, Argentina, Puerto Rico, and the United States, I remarked that I was re-creating my teaching to become meaningfully emotional. The generating theme of this book is born of my sharp experiences within those encounters at my conference. The many different elements of the moments shared during the conference and the many prior experiences that contributed to that sharing are responsible for why and how this book was born. When you receive a positive stimulus from strangers and colleagues, you feel that something out there is making sense, and the constant movement of ideas contributes to stronger convictions and a better sense of how you feel about yourself and your work. As Joe Kincheloe said, “nothing is impossible when we work in solidarity with love, respect, and justice as our guiding lights.”⁴ For me, this is fundamental to an authentic and deep learning practice.

Yet, the political decisions that teachers and professors make every day are also embedded in emotions. As feminist constructivists and critical educators (hooks, 1994; Kincheloe, 2004) have proclaimed, emotions are seen as a powerful knowing processes that ground cognition, refuted by Cartesian-Newtonian discourses that point out emotions as a contaminated agent in contradiction to reason. But, the everyday job of dealing with an uncertain and dynamic world needs the e-motional movement of insights, intuitions, inventions, and thoughtful and imperfect ideas. The complex and difficult decisions that educators in schools and universities need to perform are always grounded in emotional journeys, at least for those who connected to their audience and the content of teaching. When we make any judgment resulting in a political decision, we conduct mental, cognitive, and spiritually complex processes, such as reasoning and evaluation, judgment and assessment. I have no doubt that intellectual and personal acts are political in nature and require a superior activity that enlists our emotional participation. This is a situation in which connecting, logic, and emotion stretch the boundaries of consciousness (Kincheloe, 1993) because sometimes, rational assumptions cannot move ideas yet will, like emotion does. The social nature of our interactions and our cultural heritage become our compass and historical reserve which both moves and draws energy from the emotional engine in each of us to become formal and critical thinkers.

Pedagogy in (E)Motion: Making Bridges Across Cognition, Culture Mediation, and Sociopolitical Action

To proclaim pedagogy in (e)motion is to recognize the intrinsic and cultural power over our biological and biographic being. After many years of teaching—19 years in college and two more years as a practicing psychologist—papers, presentations, and conversations about the need to think, reflect, and feel, what I’ve called an intentional pedagogy, I came up with the expression of (e)motion. For me, the power of emotions and purposeful movement toward goals and ideas are essential and indispensable, pointing us toward an engaged and intentional pedagogy, raised from authentic personal experience, reflective action, and critical horizons. Authentic personal experiences include both the best and the worst: those critical moments in which we feel confused, lost, clueless, or astonished, and those moments when we feel interested, captivated, willing, and moved. And yet everything we do in education has an impact on others so that every movement we make engages others and, as such, is neither neutral nor static, but dynamic and in movement. A pedagogy that finds ways of searching “occluded forces”⁵ that shape lived experiences is also a pedagogy that recognizes a teacher is a biographical and biogenetic being—a social being in an ecologically collective body we call society.

On the other hand, I cannot avoid the issue of power in equity because it, in many ways, defines our relation with our students in an institution of higher education. However, we can transgress the definition that power gives to our job, because critical education must guide us to problematize that relationship in order to open other windows for other meanings. Those meanings must be negotiated, dialogued, and interpreted by students and professors in order to be mutually honest. It is also a responsibility to guide our reflections toward a critical and constant questioning about the sensible relationship that must be maintained between professors and students, and the lesson script or academic content and form; and students with other students; students and communities; as well as professors within their communities and society. The epistemological posture of being critical or having a critical thought, from a hermeneutic position, invites us to think and reflect constantly about our pedagogical practices and ourselves, advancing what Joe Kincheloe calls, sensible critical thought. This will serve as our motivation to be creative, innovative, transgressive, and sensitive with our course content and with the process of engaging in and with classroom discussions with the purpose of seeing beyond the limited content of disciplines in favor of the possibility of more than just data. In order to do this, we are compelled to explore the lives of theorists as individuals in history and contextualized so as to not fall into a vacuum of facts empty of any exploration of the contexts behind the text.

Pedagogy in (e)motion is also relevant to the necessary role of our emotions and corporal expressions in the classroom. Take for example the place of emotions in understanding empathy, solidarity, or the sensation left when sharing in a discussion of a passionate topic. We can also speak about nonconventional activities in college classrooms that take on the form of poetry, personal narratives, short stories, and

the use of dramatizations. It would be very difficult, if not unnatural, if we didn't move physically or demonstrate emotional expression. Passionate thinkers use their emotions as a part of their meta-cognitive strategies for self-understanding.

Problematising this notion, I believe it impossible that we think rationally and emotionless. Indeed, even a simple statement of fact, a flat statement if you will, is processed by the emotional brain as an emotion called "acceptance."⁶ From an epistemological standpoint, this notion of acceptance posits that something is unchangeable, and immutable reality, something the individual cannot change, which could also be understood as accommodation or conformism. By the same token, Paulo Freire (in Schipani, 2002) points to the principle of *educators as action subjects* referring to the strategic act of confronting values and ideas about the world and how it works—acts that may be embedded in a comfortable and conformist space. This is very important because it calls for another reading of the world—how and what power relations are made of—and the word—theories, history of science, history of education, history of knowledge, and so on.

Renowned educator and scholar Joe Kincheloe, addressing Soren Kierkegaard's notion of post-formal passion and its significance to the relationship between our emotional dimensions and a critical posture, remarks:

There is an intimate connection between commitment and knowing. Subjectivity, he (Kierkegaard) maintained, is not simply arbitrary—instead, it reflects the most profound connection between an individual thinker and the world. As inquiries grow passionate about what they know they develop a deeper relationship with themselves. Such a relationship produces a self-knowledge that initiates a synergistic cycle—a cycle that grants them more insight into the issue under consideration. Soon Kierkegaard argued, a form of personal knowledge is developed that uses empathetic understanding to move beyond the perception of social life as more than a set of fixed laws. Social life is better characterized as a process of being. A dialectic or the knower's personal participation in events and emotional insight gained from such participation moves us to a new dimension of knowing (1993, p. 155)

Emotions Are Bridges for Meaning and Deep Learning

Emotions are the mirror of our thoughts, and our feelings are the names we give to what we feel and what moves us. They are a physical response. One is moved and manifests oneself in movement that is at once a verb for the other. Puerto Rican writer Ana Lydia Vega (2008), with her fine and astute sense of humor as a writer and journalist, writes:

If there is something that this workshop has taught me it is that in order to touch the delicate fiber of one that reads, the chosen theme must, before all else, make the one who writes tremble. In this, life becomes text. Here resides the truth of the author. (p. 15)

Cognition and thought are yet other fascinating dimensions of my inspiration. Pedagogy in (e)motion reminds us of the fact that a known thing is a thing thought out, something lived and felt, in one way or another, and it is a branch of the tree of human livelihood that includes the emotions. We cannot separate them. Both are the product and process of lived experience itself and cognition is not simply a

department of walls, it is a space of affectivity that needs both the biographic and biologic emotive of the being in order to manifest itself. Without emotion there is no thought, and if there is thought it bears an ideological and sense-thought quality. Being neutral is being dead emotionally, and is a political posture of nonmovement. Education as an object of reality is, by nature, contradictory, and implies conservation (of data and knowledge acquired) and creation, critique, negation, and the substitution of the existent knowledge. We should look at how our attitudes, the ways that we organize our work, and the knowledge that we select contribute to the proliferation of ignorance, submission, and defeat; or how these help to forge astute individuals informative, critical and with a healthy rebelliousness, capable of nourishing the will to change things. This is the meaning of struggling for that which we do not yet know, but aspire to. It is to live in solidarity with other generations and with history itself.

Broken bridges led to alienated teachers, frustrated and tired human beings. This is the terrain for cynicism.

—n zambrana

Pedagogy in (e)motion is a bridge; it communicates and reaches the emotions of living with the movements that make possible justice and equity across all institutions. In his song *El escaramujo*, Cuban songwriter and singer Silvio Rodríguez says that he lives by questioning, and that knowing cannot be a luxury so, if knowing is not a right then surely it is a left, a metaphor that he uses to allude to a false dichotomy that we make within divergent moments that can be interpreted as the coordinates of a necessary encounter for an understanding of human nature. In his cynical mood, the singer moves the audience to feel and think outside the logical and lineal structure of the expression. Here the emotions of anger and frustration in his obvious critique serves as a powerful reservoir of affect that forces us to a re-reading of the world through questioning. This is an invitation to work with our emotions in mind and hands to create new understanding and to live in deep learning. Pedagogy in (e)motion proposes that emotions lead and enrich our pedagogy because it implies movement within ourselves. Therefore educators who are more connected with their emotional brain are more capable of stretching affective and social dimensions to be more *sentipensantes* (meaning the fusion between feeling and thinking, an Eduardo Galeano's concept, in 2000) in the learning and teaching and living processes.

Deep learning is also related to powerful emotions. Maturana (2002) speaks about the biology of love, and asserts:

We, human beings are biologically caring, as a trait of our evolutionary history. This means two things: first is that love has been the preserved central emotion of our evolutionary history that gave us origin about five or six million years ago. Second, we become sick as we lack of love as a fundamental emotion, which is central to our existence with others. (p. 46, translation by author).

Kincheloe (2004) speaking about Freire's notion of love also elevates it to a condition for critical learning. He said:

If critical pedagogy is not injected with a healthy dose of what Freire called *radical love* then it will operate only as shadow of what it could be. Such a love is compassionate, erotic, creative, sensual, and informed. Critical pedagogy uses it to increase our capacity to love, to bring the power of love to our everyday lives and social institutions, and to rethink reason in a humane and interconnected manner. Knowledge in this context takes on a form quite different from its more accepted mainstream versions. A critical knowledge seeks to connect with the corporeal and emotional in a way that understands a multiple levels and seeks to assuage human suffering. (p. 3)

Deep Learning: Time and (E)Motion in Learning Contexts

Learning that takes place in the form of an authentic context within a community of reflexive practice presents an ideal model for the preparation of teachers in the integration of new technologies—not only the digital—with pedagogical practice. This situation supposes profound and meaningful lifelong learning process. We discover a symbiosis of sorts between the contextualized learning theories of philosopher John Dewey and the theories of socially constructed learning advanced by psychologist Lev Vygotsky within the paradigm of social and dialectic constructivism, respectively. John Dewey's conception of consensual alignment in education posits that learning should provoke and celebrate reflection; but that the community of learners is born of social action; that educators, in their practice and discourse, need to provoke the conditions that stimulate thought, more than the repetitive mechanical skills, privileging communication with purpose and intent. John Dewey was aggressive in his vision of education given his emphasis on linking learning to experience, while at the same time maintaining a critical posture against the rigidity with which psychology treated the social construct called intelligence, emphasizing more so the construct of social intelligence which he called the power to live democratically in a society. And so, the school, and all formal educational contexts should have an eye toward a participatory democracy for authentic learning to flourish.

Theories of human development such as Vygotsky's (1978, 1995a, b) socio-historical theory suggest that just as cognitions are constructed as part of social interactions, so too can motivations and emotions. This theory views the environment and the person in terms of entwined reciprocal relations for understanding and explaining human development and learning, which is mediated in many diverse ways by others. The historic-cultural, more recently called theory of Vygotsky posits that the development of the intellect is the product of social contexts, the use of tools and signs, and the culture within which it occurs. Therefore interpersonal, intrapersonal, personal, and community activities are the motor of thought. After recognizing that emotions have a crucial role in thinking and dispositions, it is crucial in interpersonal, personal, and community activities. People develop executive functions or processes of thought. The research of Vygotsky (in L. Moll, 1992; Lucci, 2006; Rodríguez Arocho, 2000, 2007) tried to establish how persons, with the help of tools and signs, direct their attention, organize the files in their memory, and regulate their conduct. First, the human being works at the social level (interpersonal) and finally at the individual level (intrapersonal) where s/he appropriates

what was socially constructed. Thus, the essence of human thought and conduct reside in mediation through signs, people, and instruments. The instruments are directed toward the exterior, toward the transformations of physical and social reality. The signs and people are directed toward the interior, toward a self-regulation of behavior itself. For example, the mark that we make in a book or on an object, as a means of remembering something important was, for Vygotsky, the prototype for the mediation of complex behavior. As human beings we live in a universe of signs. Our conduct is not determined by objects but by the signs linked to objects. With respect to mental functions, Vygotsky defined the natural functions as inferior; as would be the case in the presence of elementary perception, memory, attention, and will. While cultural mental functions he defined as superior because these appear gradually through a radical transformation of the inferior functions that are constructed and organized through psychological means and interpersonal tools. These tools and means are possible through the mediation of others in the making of culture. As humans who produce culture, we need our emotional reserves to operate with others and to manage the effects that tools have on us.

One of his principal disciples, Alexander Luria, criticized of modern psychology, its apparent evasion of the mental processes as social and historical in their origin and that the important manifestations of human consciousness have been molded by human activity and its superior product-process: culture. For both theorists (Luria and Vygotsky) the fundamental error resides in the historical search for explanations of the nervous system disconnected from cultural activity; that is, a notion of psychology as no more than an empirical science, void of interpretation, by virtue of the developments that have taken and take place for the ideas of behavior, assigned law-like attributes that privilege these as units of human analysis and hence confer upon empirical explanation of thought as exclusively and fundamentally a processes of mental activity, as if nothing more than a cold and undisputable matrix of mathematized stimulus and reaction. Notwithstanding, there is a strong tendency to leave out emotions from the mechanism of the formation of reasoned ideas. In great part, this is due to a lack of clarity with respect to the role of emotions in that interrelated experience of thoughtful functions. This omission of emotions can be detected in the majority of the papers of Vygotsky's followers in the United States. However, in Spanish psychologists Del Río and Álvarez's (2007) paper titled, *From the psychology of drama to the drama of psychology: The relationship between the life and work of Lev S. Vygotsky*, we can find the voice for emotions and feelings. Actually, in my point of view, the challenge for current Vygotskian researchers will be to bring up to the analysis of the construct of emotions to explain higher levels of thinking in order to understand human development and learning.

The emotional brain, as referred to by Antonio Damasio (2003) and Le doux (2000), imposes a certain level of control and coordination with respect to bodily responses; vital to the most advanced processes. It plays the role of mediator between the reasoning brain and the body, informing and motivating the feeling-thoughtful brain. It includes the thought of feelings in such a manner that these become inseparable. It has also been posited that the limbic system plays a role in the conservation of "the continued sense of the personal self and the convictions

that we apply to our beliefs,” according to Damasio. The limbic structures—which have been related to emotions, motivation, and learning—can also be fundamental in the recognition of one animal to another member of its species for social affiliation. Long before the neocortex completes its evolution, the emotional brain is already in its place. While the links between the oldest and newer cortical centers evolve, the neocortex is already modulating, interpreting, and regulating emotional life. As evidenced in its Latin root, “emotion” connotes movement. When we are moved, bodily changes are produced. The eyes dilate in surprising happiness. The legs fly, the body dances. From Sigmund Freud and his metaphors of the mind or psyche (soul) that must take into account the emotions and impulses [of the “id”] of the inhibited nature of the human being to counterbalance societal tensions, to the functionalist William James, who on the contrary, offered an inventory of the self as the sum of what is considered “own”: the body, mind, and circumstance capable of interpreting and evaluating, we are, in the end, affective beings who create intentions, are the architects of plans, the translators of experiences and language, the communicators, constantly interpreting and sharing personal and cultural knowledge.

Making a Meaningful Relationship with Students Takes Emotions

To evaluate critically the emotions that move us is part of the dialectic constructivist mission forcing us to transgress the order of a banking and linear knowledge that also commits us to rethink our positions from the personal and collective aspects of knowledge construction toward a re-creation, a reconstruction, if you will, of the interpretations of reality, that may be parallel, but not totally contradictory. Additionally, such action brings us closer to our students because it allows the students and their professors to make strides in the direction of deep dialogical discussions. In this way, agreements and disagreements in the creation and re-creation of discursive activity will promote the necessary evidence of a future culture of students engaged in reflection and critical pedagogy capable of critically understanding and transforming the space and content, that is, the form and context of education. Naturally, in the process, both students and professors need to arrive at their understandings about the relationship and the embedded meanings of power. Most power analyses of interpersonal and group level dynamics establish, as their point of departure, that in order to adapt and master their environment, people continually need to be able to produce their own intended effects on these environments (Nafted, Blakar, Carlquist, Phelps, & Rand-Hendricksen, 2007). Power is related to intra-psychological concepts such as autonomy and competence.

Along these lines, it is necessary to recognize the power of personal relations and its affective expressions transmitted and received between students and professors in and outside the classroom; and subsequently, its possibilities at the level of cultural and political activity. Actions born of this kind of reciprocal exchange, mediated by the emotions and a deep conviction of being, can well signal a direction

aimed at an emancipating process of human educational experience. I am constantly exploring the instances in which I call my students to collaborate with me in my projects and I in theirs in different contexts: communities, schools or churches. After experiencing dialogues with some of my graduate students in a more than traditional mentor–mentoree relationship, or what I call collaborative supervision, these students truly engage their communities in the learning context drawing rich and gratifying results from their practicum experiences. In this super-vision, both, students and I take particular care of our professional and personal contradictions and dispositions in terms of their relations with the school personnel and the sensible practices in school psychology. The emotional involvement of these graduate students arrives at its own system of values and interpretations of reality, and contributes to a more critically profound understanding of their own preconceived ideas contributing to a different interpretation of family practices, dynamics, and values in order to unveil richer meanings that would otherwise remain occluded by traditional school psychology and mental health practices. Thus giving importance to the historic and cultural forces changes the living codes' values and forces us all to the problematized analysis.

And so, I have discovered that students and professors within diverse school and college settings must learn to reconstruct the meaning of sharing power in order to participate and transform the decision-making process in the many activities relevant to their disciplines and institutional committees. All must be engaged in order to forge organic committees and interest groups among students and professors, to have the space to rethink our collective relations with students, to critically engage the text, and to more justly evaluate the policy-setting environment of our university. The diversity of students and professors engaging in open discussions and open spaces makes possible the consensus and healthy conflicts certain to result in gains for any institution. When democratizing the barriers that traditional power relations like those of professors and students, our contexts become less certain, more flexible, less definitive, and as such, more fluid, lending themselves to a broader, richer, and more participatory possibility of interpretation. For almost 8 years at the University of Puerto Rico, a group of professors created and conducted the Cátedra Freire (Committee of Freirean Scholars), our colleagues and a group of graduate students shared a space for the discussion and coordination of academic, cultural, and political activities that drew from the educational principles of Paulo Freire. I recall that one of our most revealing activities included a series of dialogues and discussion sessions related to the tensions between the Student Council of the College of Education, the Office of the Dean of the College of Education, and other student groups. I think we all grew as these encounters challenged our own personal agendas and interpretations of what dialogue is, as our capacity to transgress the official discourse of the faculty was tested. While most uncomfortable to many, such an experience affords us the opportunity to capitalize on the possibilities of critically understanding and utilizing our emotional reserves in our actions, reflections, and negotiations. Here I refer to the process of negotiation as an opportunity for each of us to redefine and collectively encourage new meanings of consensus.

A Political Warning! Nothing Escapes Interpretation

In traditional Cartesian ways of understanding education the ability to conceptualize has little to do with culture, power or discourse, or with the tacit understandings unconsciously shaped by them. Moreover, from a Cartesian perspective, the curriculum becomes merely a body of finalized knowledge to be transmitted and engrained in the minds and bodies of our students. More critical observers may contend that this is a naive view, but the naïveté is recognizable only if knowledge formation is understood as a complex and ambiguous social activity. The human mind is more than a mirror of nature. A critical epistemology assumes that the mind creates rather than reflects, and the nature of this creation cannot be separated from the surrounding social world (Kincheloe 2004). The act of interpreting data, music, or art is mediated by emotions and an affirmation that we are much more than a simple sum of memorized particles. We are also our memories compressed in events, smells, tastes, and sensations, accompanied by visual and audible images that connect constantly with our limbic system in order to make meaningful learning.

Critical education knowledge emerges neither from subjects nor from objects but from a dialectical relationship between the knower (subject) and the known (object) (Kincheloe, 1993). If we take Jean Piaget's interpretation of knowledge construction, this dialectical relationship is represented by the assimilation–accommodation dyad. Given information—in the form of an event or a concept, or a name, objects, action, etc.—is processed and understood when we assimilate it; but when the information changes partially or completely, we must accommodate it in order to get a balance or an equilibrium out of that new and different information. In epistemological terms, this occurs in order to open our senses and memories to other meanings that can coexist with previous ones. Employing these conceptualizations, critical teachers can see that knowledge is culturally produced and recognize the need to construct their own criteria for evaluating its quality. This constructivist sense-making process is a means by which teachers can explain and introduce students to the social and physical world and help them build for themselves an epistemological infrastructure for interpreting the phenomena they confront.

In Piaget's interpretation, the role of the child's culture is being played out simultaneously with their learning. But from a Vygotskian perspective, which places more weight on cultural action, culture is internalized as a psychological and biogenetic system that “colors” our brain. Culture is like an internal program that wires the pathways in our brain providing us a map with which to interpret the world. Because it is historical and runs parallel with personhood, culture is also reprogrammed. Many definitions for culture includes traditions, meanings, beliefs, and societal values. Yet an important aspect of culture is the presence of the elements that support the interpretive background of societies—interpretive skills that within our cultures we pass from generation to generation. As I have often shared, cultures also undergo many adaptive processes in order to renegotiate certain living codes and challenge any suggestion of culture as a vacuum of technological, societal, ethical, and economic status.

Since reality and history have a dialectical quality, are dynamic, and are mutually conditioned by our cultural action, children and educators must confront their culture in itself and its artifacts, tools, and signs. This action becomes an intentional practice that converts the relation between biological heritage and cultural heritage. Here, biology is no longer the point of origin of action and development. Rather, it is culture that nourishes and moves the developmental process and subsequent learning of persons. Thus, an educated person in this context begins to construct her own meaning-making structures, her own interpretive strategies, our own criteria for producing and consuming knowledge. Critical constructivists realize that because of the social construction of knowledge, their interpretations and infrastructures are a part of the world, but they are not always in the world. As a result, when the recognition of the need arises, we can always modify our viewpoints—we can accommodate (Kincheloe, 1993).

Bridge to Political Refle-action

Pedagogy in (e)motion is an innovative and transgressive proposal because it posits that pedagogy has to be moved by the emotions—both positive and negative ones. I believe that the negative connotations assigned to emotions have more to do with an ideological reading of emotions that needs to be problematized. This exercise would contribute to bridging the gap between intellectual, cultural, and political questions. When I speak of bridging, I am referring to the deliberate connections constructing ways to facilitate encounters. I do not pretend to be talking about easy access to decision making or agreements. Indeed, the bridges that all critical pedagogy must encounter should recognize the difficulties, frustrations, contradictions, and misfortunes that characterize interactions with others. Therefore, to build bridges and to work toward a consensus is a matter of hope, lots of will, passion, and motion. Again, as individuals we are a blend of biocultural, biographical, and biological dimensions. Each of us spends much of her or his time thinking about the self and this is sufficient to legitimize our positions. These reflections are however born in particular settings, nests, and places within society. It is this assumption of personhood and voice that motivates me to write about emotions as a biological and biographical genre in all of us as educators.

I decided to name this notion or concept “(e)motion” by taking the word emotion and dividing it into two complementary voices as in a mathematical equation. In this way its significance would come forward. Emotions are what move us from inside and their nature is as fascinating as that of the brain itself.⁷ Emotions have been conceptualized as actions and movements that “play out in the theater of the body,”⁸ while their products—which we call feelings—are played out in the theater of the mind. Both are fundamental to an understanding of the complexity of our humanity and how pedagogy in (e)motion can build bridges across cognition, culture, and the sociopolitical change. Pedagogy in (e)motion is an attempt to describe the interconnections between our inner world made of sensations, interpretations, and feelings with the physical world—our contacts, spaces, environments—in which we

manifest ourselves. By describing our human experience with the purpose of reinventing our pedagogy we take personal strides to comprehend others and ourselves in the same space. It is a personal urgency that allows us to offer to others.

In one of his many illuminating works,⁹ my colleague, Pedro Subirats, expresses that we come from a biogenesis that stands for the origins of life on our planet as well as from an embryogenesis that stands for our particular embryonic development. But we also have a biographic nature that stands for the ways we perceive, act, and interpret reality, and develop living codes that we call culture. We write our lives and become civil individuals who, for better or worse, sometimes, and more specifically when we have power, determine the values of others. As we think ourselves as people who educate, we are proclaiming both dimensions: biographical and biogenetic. But also, we compromise ourselves to reflect deeply and constantly about our human and cultural nature, our impact on others and how our actions are conducted for an understanding of the good and passionate conflict, and for the possibilities that such an engagement can present.

The acts of teaching and learning are very passionate, visceral, and political: people reaching other people, both feeling and thinking other people, people learning from other people, people deciding for other people. What is education if not a political and emotional act? Emotions are the mirrors of our thoughts, and what we call feelings, is a category we identify in order to name that which we feel and moves us. It is our physical response to our emotions that moves us to act, to rethink, to rewrite, and also to reread. One is accustomed to saying that something or someone has moved us when special emotional sensations play out in our mind and body. Our many human expressions result not only in a linguistic production of the emotional, but also in written and artistic expressions present which reveal our emotions when creating and manifesting a given result with all of its complexities and intention to any human situation. As Juan Ignacio Pozo¹⁰ expresses, “to know and recognize our emotions is like getting to know our many representations as humans, since they are pure intention and purpose.”

Thinking in (E)Motion Needs Courage and Action

In a conversation I had with a colleague about the world order, our pedagogy, and our students' responses to related themes, we came up with some reflections about that which shapes our dialogue. My colleague recalled a conference she attended at the 2007 meeting of the American Education and Research Association on the subject of mindful teaching, based on the work of Parker Palmer. The presenters at this conference explored the importance of the teacher's professional identity, vision and perception of her students, and the discipline needed to promote profound changes. This line of thought adopts an approach of mindful or contemplative teaching. As interesting as this approach seems, there remains a dimension I consider fundamental to any analysis. This dimension is defined by our ethical values and political stance. We may not always be in agreement, but we can at least admit to our political position in the interpretations of the world and as such engage with respect to

in the presence of other positions. Author of *The courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teachers Life*, Parker Palmer, presents us poignantly with the notion of the “power of love and forgiveness” promoting a connectedness between “personhood”¹¹ and its possibilities to transcend. This is exactly what interested us in our dialogues regarding mindful teaching. For me, a sense of personhood must include and never neglect our political and cultural dimensions. It is essential that we recognize our connectedness if we are to overcome and transform human injustice and, in the broadest sense, our ecological destruction.

The moment we turn our back on our connectedness or distance ourselves from the subject we are teaching, we sink into an acceptance of an inauthentic rupture from what and how we teach. Orphaned from our feelings and connectedness to culture our knowledge becomes a mimeograph, a copy or reproduction of something not ours as teachers or as students, sacrificing the possibilities of a deeper, more profound, and transformative educational practice. This makes the subject that we are studying or the content of our educational practice distant and artificial 1—and as such, the distancing our students from the world, our interpretations of the world, and the possibilities that they engage in with their own world in the context of the content studied. As teachers, honesty and identity in our approaches are the only insurance we have. This honesty and identity require the integration of a critical lens from which we can see and interpret the world amidst differences of positions and contradictions, and still project hope for improvement. In his book, *Critical Pedagogy and Predatory Culture: Oppositional Politics in a Postmodern Era*, Peter McLaren (1995) discusses the concept of identity from the perspective of a metaphor, of a narrative that touches the borders of uncertainty: “A text, identities cannot be fixed within closed systems of meanings; consequently, there are no true identities—only identities that are open to inscription, articulation, and interpretation” (1995, p. 99). Again, the inconclusive nature of identity is reinforced by McLaren’s position. As such, as educators we must recognize the cultural and political forces and influences in our pedagogy that can sway from conformity on the one hand to resistance on the other. This dynamic, the very real presence of human contradictions, then makes mindful teaching and learning more manageable and enjoyable.

As critical pedagogues, we are committed to action and not passivity. We place love and forgiveness and a critical perspective couched in the necessity of connectedness with the emotions, passions, and aspirations in the context of a struggle for justice. We cannot be oppressive with our students and at the same time claim that we love them. But we can accept our relative positions of power problematize them, look for alternative transactions, while being honest and politically centered. Because our emotions and feelings shape our consciousness, we must, as teachers, be critical beyond any notion that would lead us to patronize or concede. The delicate connections between emotions and actions must be empowering, not to concede but to assert. Critical postmodern teachers are not politically neutral, as they identify with a critical system of meaning and all of its allegiances. The difference between critical postmodern teachers and teachers who see themselves as neutral is that critical postmodern practitioners admit to their political preferences and invite others

to claim theirs. Claims of neutrality are dangerous when one examines the work of teaching. On a daily basis, teachers choose to include some forms of knowledge while excluding others from the curriculum, and legitimate particular beliefs while delegitimizing others. Being neutral is being dead emotionally, and it is a political posture of nonmovement. We always have a project underway in our classroom. Everything has a purpose, a goal.

(E)Motion and Education: Experience and Mind Threading

Truth is only transmitted when it is born from personal experience

—Fabio Cristallini, former student

Emotion, as a concept, has been inspired by my many personal experiences in the field of postsecondary education and psycho-educational assessment. Those sociopolitical and educational contacts are the engine that moves me to undertake many different but complementary tasks including psycho-educative assessments, therapeutic sessions, school psychology supervision with graduate students, my efforts as a college professor and human rights activist, among others. My personal-professional experiences have made possible my insertion into different challenging scenarios, while being challenged by my students and their questions regarding how and why I teach. Their many questions also move me to consider my own aspirations as a woman, academic, and professional within a colonized country. From a more spiritual perspective, the personal and affective domains of human actions and thoughts, if we are to be critical and affective pedagogues, implies that we put some critical motion into our thoughts and motivations. Living is constant learning; living is constant change. Life involves feelings and movements into multiple contexts and so too in the act of learning and teaching.

Context for learning should be as authentic as possible; if not, we must transform them to create spaces for meaningful experiences in school and college, on the streets, and in other communities. The core of this concept is the affirmation that thinking is basically emotion and movement, since the emotional dimension of our human mind inevitably shapes our ideas. Our evolved mind is a piece of genetic art that finds its expression in the contexts of the social fabric. I am not using a concept-evolved mind to signify more of the rational over the subjective. Our mind is art, inspired by design. Our mind is genetic history, too. But both identities of our mind-biology and art are integrated and their product is culture. As Vygotsky reminded us, “when the biological heritage ends, cultural heritage begins.” In other words, our subjectivity moves any logic that we construct. Many authors from diverse disciplines have named education not a mere act of defining, but a social practice and a human action that leads human beings to understand the world and problematize it. Fernando Savater¹² considered that if culture is made manifest, as biologist Jean Rostand¹³ said, “When humankind adds to the individual, then, education is the effective consolidation of human nature where it exists only as a possibility.” In other words, what a critical teacher would pose as emancipatory pedagogy would indeed be nothing short of a space for the reinvention of power in the relations

of concepts, acknowledging them, but likewise assuming possibility as the only limit.

On October 2007 I presented a conference before a group of school counselors on the supervision process within specific school contexts.¹⁴ I shared my ideas about the concepts of emotions and movement in my proposal for the processes of supervision with collaboration, as I had been practicing with my school psychology students. One of the participants in the conference raised interesting questions and comments about the reading that she was making of my presentation. This particular participant came up when with a metaphor that to her made it easier to make sense of what I was saying. She called it the *mundillo* (moon-dee-yo) metaphor. *Mundillo*¹⁵ is the name of a very particular type of needlework in Puerto Rico. It is a very complex, detailed, and fragile art form. And so, the participant's metaphor came to signify the complex dynamics that one had to understand and reflect upon when mentoring students in a *power-full*¹⁶ situation while simultaneously generating knowledge in order to deal with and manage situations in a sensitive and sensible way. I adopted that metaphor because the process of constructing the supervision relationship and turning it into a reciprocal supervision or more mentoring relationship was the product of agreement as to accommodate the students' knowledge, insight, and power—since they were the only mentorees providing psycho-educational services at the school. With this, our power relationship was more balanced and became the terrain for multiple and shared learning. This is part of the fun of *having wonderful ideas*, as Duckworth¹⁷ would say, living ideas that can portray the essence of our thoughts and inevitable connections when talking about passionate topics such as education and psychology.

Remembering my school years, many memories come to mind including the great teachers I had: talented, engaged with students, and their talents involved in poetry, oratory, reading, and scientific contests, to mention but some. I come from a family with generations of school workers including teachers, a school principal, a superintendent, and school dining personnel, secretary, and a social worker. Given my diverse direct and indirect experiences in and with different educational settings, I feel comfortable affirming that much of the suffering and struggles of school workers are attributable to the time and emotionally consuming tasks that damage the quality of the affective time spent with students and their creative socialization processes, factors of the utmost significance in any pedagogy with sense. Teachers are education workers located in a social class often characterized by poor working conditions, devalued morale, and economic inequities. This reality provokes profound detachment in their relationships with students, families, and other colleagues. On the other hand, for most committed teachers, there is the tremendously difficult task to be realized in an environment where professional progress, human progress as educators, and even survival are, to a significant degree, dependent on public, that is, the state's determined priorities. I am at once reminded of a dialogue I had with a stranger over the Internet regarding her negative perceptions of teachers I during the aftermath of the 2007 teachers strike in Puerto Rico.¹⁸ I recall saying: "the teaching process is not meant to demonstrate or shuffle test tubes, or to enter colonies of bacteria, nor to prepare conditions controlled for experimentation (alluding to

my concerns over the meaning of objectivity in education). The process, to educate, is to do pedagogy that promotes and develops our social and spiritual fire, and all materials of the human world, that are at once unpredictable, and in Puerto Rico particularly, this means an unpredictability of the ideological conditions of a colonized country. The human world is complex and requires much patience and will to resist.” In the aftermath of our exchange, the woman and I subsequently shared much e-mail on the topic; and I feel that we arrived at an understanding. In the second chapter of this book, titled *Street Pedagogy*, there will be more about this and other stories.

Reflection and Be (E)Moted to Unfold Reality

Pedagogy in (e)motion is a proposal for practices that explore initiatives, personal experiences, academic risks, and social commitments; that move students and teachers physically and emotionally to enhance more meaningful learning. The movement can create bridges across cognition, pedagogy, and political change, accepting ruptures and proposing a dialectical attitude to deal with educational and social problems. Therefore, interaction within possible contexts like schools, universities, and community is vital. Pedagogy in (e)motion race is the voice for transgressive interpretations of social, emotional, and political issues that enliven us as interpretive beings. An ecological and critical educational approach suggests that the classroom micro-context converges with the more external influences as potential—social, political, economic, and cultural forces. This relationship conditions the possibility to enhance and empower people’s thinking processes, as well as any creative products such as ideas, and the tools necessary as resources for teaching. What a powerful tool it is to rethink the learning experience with another.

Teachers’ teaching tools can be students’ tools, but students learning tools are always a good source for teachers’ cultural tools. As professors at the college level, we should facilitate and reveal the tools that make possible authentic dialogues, e-motion, and impassioned debates in a way that compels our future teachers to motivate these practices in their schools. This takes more time than a single course has to offer. As Darling Hammond remarked during a congress celebrated at the University of Puerto Rico in 2005: solutions that come from higher levels of power never understand the real school problems and they are destined to fail; mass production of decisions have a lineal understanding of the educational problems, which make them insufficient. Real teaching is not a routine, students are not passive, and questions of practice are very complex, contradictory, and unpredictable, reason why instructional and operational decisions cannot be packaged and handed down to teachers.

In these times of the No Child Left Behind (educational public law) logic and related policies, teachers are being held accountable, if not blamed, for the shortcomings of their professional activities with little or no attention given to the universities and education programs that prepare them. We must accept responsibility for what we do. Yet, the system which prepares educators must call for an

examination and profound questions must be raised regarding education and not simply reduce all proposals for reform to an application of sanctions on the basis of the expediency provided by questionable measures of accountability, like teaching to the test and its subsequent implications and results.

Emotion Nurtures the Intellect: Cultural Mediation for the Mundillo Craft

Because emotions are intense by nature, they nurture our thoughts and behavior. Nobody can escape from their history. Memory makes possible our personal and collective history, acting as sociocultural building blocks.

Let's take this relational vignette as an example of the power of memory from the infant's point of view:

The mother plays with her infant, covering his face with a blanket while changing his diaper. She laughs, she changes her tone of voice, and she sings, and tells him words with rhymes, words that both know familiar words and sounds. The baby laughs, every time she unfolds the blanket and he sees mom's face. He sees—rediscovers the hidden object-person—his mom's image. His eight-year-old sister, who was watching them, asks her father, who is also in the picture watching everything: "doesn't he know that mommy will be there [under the towel]?" The father responds: "Yes. Ah! That's why he must be so happy!"

The girl's assumptions about what was in her brother's mind and about the meaning are placed on the event, where her own mediated interpretations about his behavior are the starting point for our complex thinking. In the course of these interactions thousands of cells in the brain are activated. In this process some connections between brain cells (neurons) are strengthened establishing new connections and inform more complex networks of communication within our brain. Our emotions of well-being and happiness are fortified, strengthened, and recorded thanks to the brain's hypo-field.¹⁹ Research in this area has permitted us to identify areas of the brain that are activated when mental or complex cognitive processes are realized, as in the cases of logic, reasoning, and critical judgment. Without a doubt, this identification describes dimension without which our superior mental activity would be impossible. The mental processes begin here, as very complex social interactions, social mediations, and constructive activity, central to the person engaged. It is interesting to note that as research in the field of neuroscience advances, the sensibility of our brain to our lived experiences, the formal school, home and its learning, society and its cannons, are made much more evident. To do research that would have us rethink the brain not as one more muscle, but as a biogenetic and biographic organization would be to engage a consideration of power in cultural action as a regulating mechanism of human conduct. Taking contemporary perspectives in the neurosciences as a point of departure, and a constructivist, postmodern focus of cognition and Freirean pedagogy, we realize the importance of social interaction and cultural mediation in the development of complex forms of thought.

Human development—like the development of peoples—is the product of an exchange between the biological, the social, and the political. It is that *mundillo* referred to earlier and is precisely the metaphor which helps me to develop the idea of a pedagogy in (e)motion. It has been demonstrated that the connections formed between and within neurons depend on the experiences in the physical and social realms. During the first years of life our bodies produce an impressive quantity of connections. These connections will depend not only on the genetic interlacing with its anatomic and biochemical constitutions but also on the affective nourishment of the organism, or nurture, stimulation, and caring in the educational context to which we are exposed in our sociocultural worlds. Psychology in all its foci—psychoanalysis, psychosocial, ecological, behavioral, humanistic studies—has always recognized the importance of our first inter-actions in our psychological development. The real novelty has been the establishment that these inter-actions directly affect our neural networks.

Negative experiences, or the absence of adequate stimulation and links with significant positive affective meaning in all areas of social life, can result in serious and sustained consequences. Abuse, negligence, and problems associated with social and economic inequality adversely impact mental development. These conditions constitute risk factors in all dimensions of development leaving manifest the social vulnerability of the brain. My colleague and philosopher, Pedro Subirats, shared with his students and colleagues the following reflections which he titled, “*World change: for a quantum leap in human affairs, what is the question?*”

If Hamlet were alive today, he would say, with more conviction than ever: “to be or not to be that is the question.” But now he would not ask this question pondering before a human skull but before the living world. Can we opt to just be in this planet or extinguish ourselves like the dinosaur? We are quickly arriving at a great division line, a critical global point. Our survival is in check. We are destroying our social fiber. There is a growing insecurity in the rich countries as in the poor countries with a greater propensity to war and terrorism. Islamic fundamentalism is spreading in the Middle East; religious fanaticism is growing in America, neo-Nazis and other extremist movements are diffusing throughout Europe. But the void is widening between the rich and powerful and the poor and marginal. 80% plus of the world’s domestic product belongs to one billion people the remaining 20% and when is shared by 5.5 billion persons. One of every three urban inhabitants lives in marginalized communities, urban ghettos, and slums. More than 900 million people are classified as inhabitants within the beltway of inhumane conditions of misery, degrading, and indignified. (2008, p. 1, free translation by collage Dr. José Solís)

As a psychologist and critical educator, the reflexive conception of development is a continuous process of changes, sequences, moments, and stages between living beings which suffer together, appreciate one another, study one another, and engage one another—not measure—across time and space. These changes occur in our biological bodies, emotional bodies, spiritual bodies, cultural and mental bodies, and have multiple effects on the person as an individual and on the person as part of the greater world. It is not possible to study, with precision, the biological occurrences nor social political events without a hermeneutic and interpretive context that calls on the indignation-action: action-reflection, to educate from the perspective

of (e)motion. As expressed by Onavis Cabrera in his book, *Paulo Freire: su pensamiento y el paradigma de la impugnación* (2004), the notion of dialogue implies the accommodation of that which challenges instructional, in its content and in its form, for instructional is, above all else, anti-dialogical and reflects a culture of silence and double standards.

If There Is a Broken Bridge, We Can Reinvent a Healing One

*I would love that my students remember me as
a door that help them to enter into the world.*

—Undergraduate- student -teacher

The above student's reflection moves me to think about the imponderable difficulties that they will find when trying to enter "into" the world of teaching. But those obstacles are not as important as the affective and cognitive tools that pedagogy of the emotions can offer. Understanding the metaphor of the door, cited above, is tantamount to embarking on a journey into the student teacher's deepest motivations and desires. Much of our work resides in the places of our emotions, memories, and movements. Dancer, educator, and writer Mabel Elsworth Todd (in Kincher, 1990, p. 79) has said: "Emotion constantly finds expression in bodily position," and body position is a decision we make. And so the aspiring student teacher must make a decision to move toward a goal or succumb to the possibility of never accomplishing it. Moreover, she would need to predispose herself with passion in the planning and the process that would lead to the achievement of her goal. In a pedagogy in (e)motion teachers are completely committed to being active motivated for both motion and emotions.

From the metaphors—bridge, dancing, window, doors—which we can use in education to describe, in sensible ways, its dynamic nature, those which link movement and emotion may very well represent the necessary motivation for the realization of our pedagogical goal. Why we would need this pedagogy becomes the crucial question. The critical answer: why not exercise a pedagogy that promotes the possibilities for sustained and thoughtful human living? Can an educator reach cognition and political action without being (e)motioned? By no means can we assume a naive point of view, but being in hope—as Freire expressed (1990), not waiting without action—rather in a combative and suspicious attitude, prepared to connect to meaning and forge new realities. Pedagogy is a human act, and a relational activity by definition. It has to do with the act of teaching and learning in a determined context with its cultural and ideological premises. Having a normative system presupposes that there are controls, limits, and a hierarchy. Yet, it is naive to consider that "the system" is free of contradictions of what education must be and why. And it is precisely the contradictions of our thoughts as feelings wedded to our practice that we, as critical educators with a pedagogy and (e)motion, must identify, reflect, and act upon: an educator, sensible enough and engaged with her reality

such that she can reach into the destructive and pessimistic comforting numbness of what for too long she has superficially accepted and transform it into a creative and hopeful journey.

We must remember that against all odds, there are teachers that resist; teachers who dream; teachers who invent and reinvent themselves no matter how experienced they are. There are teachers who get involved in adventures and calculated risks; teachers who have learned to relearn; teachers who transgress the textbooks in search for meaning; teachers and school principals who share their power and invert their roles; supervisors who think that their teachers are the school's everyday heroes. Pedagogy in (e)motion is this activity in which you and I have an emotional relationship that can embark us upon many interesting projects, one of them being the building of bridges, to heal, to fix, to break, to empower, to transgress, and ultimately to position ourselves as educators and interpreters of our human and physical reality with political clarity and purpose. I recognize that there is much more to dialogue and research about human emotions, learning contexts, and cognition. This proposal is a concrete and strong point to begin with.

Notes

1. Maybe his first publication about emotions was: *What is an Emotion?* William James (1884). First published in *Mind*, 9, 188–205, found in *Classics in the History of Psychology: An internet resource* developed by Christopher D. Green, York University, Toronto, Ontario, <http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/James/emotion.htm>
2. In Alvarez, H. (2006), p. 139. Chapter 6 is about motions and its role in learning concepts, reason, and social relations.
3. Concept by bell hooks, p. 13 in *Teaching to transgress*, 1994.
4. In *Critical Pedagogy*, 2004, p. 3
5. Concept by Joe Kincheloe, written in a 2007 manuscript sent to the author.
6. *Acceptance* is an emotion proposed by Plutchick (2001, in Álvarez, 2006), p 141.
7. For a more complete explanation, see *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, sorrow, and the feeling brain* (2003) by Antonio Damasio. He is the Van Allen Distinguish Professor and head of the department of neurology at the University of Iowa Medical Center.
8. I took this idea from Antonio Damasio, *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, sorrow, and the feeling brain* (2003, p. 28.)
9. I translated his thought with some variation, with permission. Taken from Subirats, P. (2008). *Filosofía de la educación: introducción al curso en tres escenarios*. UPR.
10. Juan Ignacio Pozo (2003), *Adquisición de conocimiento: cuando al carne se hace verbo*, describes in a remarkable way how all societies are organized in a rather complicated fashion, making very different and interesting the new adaptations of our brain in social life.
11. From the Leo Buscalia book, *Personhood: The art of being fully human* (1978). I use the concept to name selfhood because I find it more inclusive.
12. He is professor of sociology at the Universidad a Distancia (UNED) and member of Amnesty International, member of the Radical Party, whose definition is “party for direct and no violent action.”
13. French biologist, zoologist, and writer, who dedicated his life to research in a small laboratory near his place.
14. The title of the conference was School Psychology Supervision for a Non-Violent Living in School Settings; was conducted and written in Spanish.

15. *Mundillo* is a needlework technique originally from Puerto Rico. Is a very difficult and delicate art of making lace out of silk thread.
16. I use the term Serrano García (2005) introduced in her article Mentorship: A powerful relationship in *Pedagogía*, 39, 99–124.
17. It is the title of a book by Eleanor Duckworth (2006). *The having of wonderful ideas and other essays on teaching and learning* (3rd ed.). New York: Teachers's College Press
18. The Puerto Rico Teachers Federation called teachers across the country to protest the 30 months they were without a negotiated contract. The government, under Law 45 which limited the right to strike, set up many technical and bureaucratic obstacles to any resolution provoking a 2-week strike that paralyzed 60% of the public school system and divided the once tight consensus within the teaching class. The strike was begun some 9 months before general elections in Puerto Rico.
19. In the book *El pensameinto del bebé (The infant thinking)*, by Barnet & Barnet, 2005

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Chapter 2

Street Pedagogy and the Power of Street Stories: Complicity and Convergence Among Freire and Vygotsky’s Ideas

... the relation between reading and writing which should be understood as processes that cannot be separated, should be organized in such ways to create the perception that they are needed for something, a perception, as Lev Vygotsky emphasized of being something that children need and that we too need.

Paulo Freire, In Letters to those who dare to teach (1998, p. 23)

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The Origin of an Idea: From Hope to Potentiality

In Freire's thought resides a grand lesson and its pertinence belongs to all learning processes that, without a doubt, touch the most profound internal needs of the individual as well as those that are collective in nature. With respect to the process of literacy, the most important and principal vehicle for the appropriation of the world in its iconic, semiotic, and gesticular forms, using all human feelings, the task of an educator is to commit herself to and with the learner accompanying her, in order for the latter to project a trajectory with the tools and a deck permits her to reinvent herself. The concept of pedagogy in (e)motion captures the intention that we would seek to articulate as a proposition for the elimination of the distances between emotions and cognition; in that way street pedagogy is a concept that rescues street wisdom and popular wisdom as treasures of a people that need to be nourished and recognized. Streets are, by common definition, many things: open places, roads to explore, and difficult scenarios with playgrounds, meeting points.

The concept of *street pedagogy* was born from my writing experience as a visiting scholar at Harvard University. I was living in Jamaica Plain, a neighborhood in Boston, while putting together a dialogue session and other didactic presentations about Freire and Vygotsky's legacies to be presented to graduate students in education. It was a happy and challenging occasion for a good reading of the *word in the world*. The very invitation to a street experience already carries with it a connotation of adventure and risk. And it is this which I wish to propose with street pedagogy, an invitation to risk in favor of possibility, but that which in a world that has criminalized and vandalized the social spaces bordered by the formal spaces of our societies and. The street as context has been left dispossessed of the experience of knowing; it has been left out of academia, of the formal school, and of other formal institutions; and it is on the street where every day we decontextualize thousands of students in an act of violent institutional power. I re-name what institutional diagnostics refers to as "dropouts," in another manner: I call them "disillusioned students." Thousands of citizens have progressed in spite of the system that tossed them out of school. And those thousands of citizens have managed to transform the predictable realities assigned to them by a positivist and psychological tradition.

The redefinition of knowledge, then, is a fundamental part of this action. If in fact this redefinition presents multiple aspects, one of the most important would be the democratization of access to knowledge, to name knowledge as that which has been forged without the formal intervention of the state, in school as much as in society at large. Where knowledge is a form of cultural capital, street pedagogy is then an oasis of renovation born of *sense-thought*, drawing "truths" of people that read the world using a shared sense of the sources of knowledge or "funds of knowledge" (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005) that abound in the communities, neighborhoods, and alleys. The funds of knowledge perspective is a transgressive way to see knowledge content and education because it is based on the idea of connecting educators with their communities—the school community—through the ethnographic study of the communities in which they live, particularly household visits and interviewing.

We all need from others, while reading and writing extends and projects ourselves toward others, and vice versa. The bounds of some walls, such as a classroom or open spaces such as communities, serve us to think and move with emotion our ideas, trademarks of our nature. And it is undeniable that human beings create *zones of proximity or potential development*, as Vygotsky coined the expression which help us to scaffold our abilities with the mediation of others—and so we create zones of possibility, a term inspired in me by Freire’s practices while reading and living the experiences in his book, *Pedagogy with hope*. These two types of zones are recognizable in many contexts, such as the street: the outside world, the field of people who can manage some kind of power, language and intentions. This chapter has a collage of very simple and yet complex life events that I put together into a coherent, but no less humane act of “my critical reading-writing of the world” (my reference to Freire’s conceptualization of reading the world critically and politically).

While looking for the best connecting route for the political, psychological, and pedagogical ideas of Lev Vygotsky and Paulo Freire I came upon this idea of street pedagogy. The idea was born from being in the streets—in the open spaces, those places where I encountered the possibilities that became inspirational, born of my journeys into Jamaica Plain neighborhood in Boston, Massachusetts. Through my encounters with the people of the neighborhood (our street pedagogy), I decided to give direction to an essay that I was working on about the convergences between Freire and Vygotsky’s thoughts and theories, mainly because thought develops as a cultural and historic entity of the psychological nature of ourselves (Arias-Beatón, 2005).

I coined the meetings with the neighborhood folks, “street pedagogy.” This idea was born from being in the streets—in the open space, at the point of the encounter were the possibilities of an inspiration that the neighborhood of Jamaica Plain represented, became a reality. Street pedagogy as a concept revealed itself to me through intense dialogues with the people from the neighborhood. I decided to give direction to my essay together with an exploration of the convergences between Freire and Vygotsky’s thoughts and theories. It was given various dialogues that I had with the employees and the owner of a beauty parlor in that neighborhood where I discovered the appropriate route to that convergence. Street pedagogy is the power that emerges from the people that through sense-thoughts gives meaning to their own social-political-cultural context. Within the stories-dialogues presented, there are many points of convergence and dialogical complicity between Freire and Vygotsky, especially those that reflect political clarity and a language using expressions with meanings and readings of the dominant ideology and history. These people can read their world, even when they do not share in the prestige and recognition of academia and the many in that context that never seemed to be able to read the connections between political, social, or economic events. The concept of *funds of knowledge*, mentioned before, is a source of inspiration since we discover points of convergence between official knowledge and community knowledge. This situation allows for communicative competence or the capacity to forge communications developed by the members of a community where Spanish dominates, but where English is

also spoken, as in the case of this neighborhood, in a cultural space marked by the experiences of the Caribbean (Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, among others mediated by the experience in the United States).

I would first like to deliver my comparative analysis of Freire and Vygotsky's lives and the principal ideas that make possible an understanding of the roots of the concept and practice of street pedagogy.

Freire the Educator and Vygotsky the Psychologist

Our reading of Vygotsky and Freire is a reconstructive process in which we grant meaning to what we read. These meanings, elaborated from our formative experiences in particular cultural, social, historical, and institutional contexts, interact with the meaning of the authors of the texts, and they record themselves, as well, in formative experiences and specific contexts as well. (author's translation)

W. Rodríguez Arocho (2000, p. 3)

I came to the field of education with my own academic *deformity*: I am a clinical and school psychologist who loves to be an educator, but never was a teacher in a school classroom. I insist in the word *deformity* because, for me, it illustrates the difficult paths that I had to journey upon in order to transform the conventional views of education and psychology of which I was a part into more inclusive, divergent, and broadened views of both fields. De-formation implies a process of many changes that take time, spaces, and intense experiences. Paulo Freire and Lev Vygotsky's thoughts have revolutionized my practices, from my early college years to the present. Their ideas and proposals have changed the academic and the psychological and sociological fields broadening convergences with many other disciplines in the natural and social sciences, changing the rigid discourses in both a psychology and education. Both thinkers were deeply influenced by a dialectical epistemology, "if I think, you think"; and that idea that collective thinking explains individual thinking; "the individual is also social existence." Their thoughts were impacted by the historical materialism of Karl Marx,¹ but with different trajectories.

In Vygotsky's work, historical materialism is embedded throughout, transforming the psychology of cognition into a human psychology. The Russian psychologist died very young—in 1934—so he was unable to develop many of his theses; for example, the important role of emotions in thought and language. Notwithstanding, his collaborator, Alexander Luria, was responsible for finding and rescuing many of his manuscripts and experiments. Vygotsky's genius and intrepid spirit moved him to confront the crisis of the psychology of "his time." The enthusiastic group of Vygotsky, Luria, Leontiev, and five student-collaborators, devoted "almost all of its

waking hours to our grand plan for reconstruction of psychology” (Luria, 1979, in Gredler & Shields, 2008).

Freire, on his part, lived much more to understand, interpret, and fight for the new challenges that Latin American education had to confront. His countless intellectual encounters with educators from different contexts throughout the world enriched his theoretical thought and educational practice with a critical and constant reconceptualization of location in class struggles. While Vygotsky stated that schools are the best settings for the generation of knowledge, Freire always defended that knowledge for liberation cannot emerge from systematic education and standard schooling. Both thinkers argued the schools are at times empty space or even dangerous places where educational practices and educators fail to understand the foundations of thought: the sociocultural and political action mediated by tools, signs, and meanings directed toward zones of possibilities and challenges.

On the behalf of psychology and education, Lev Vygotsky and Paulo Freire have “spoken from the future,”² making them two visionaries in time and space. Their writings speak from their beliefs and struggles to nurture our power as psychologists, educators, and students, by presenting the mental and concrete tools to transform problematic tradition of certain metaphors used in education and psychology (“*tabula rasa*,” the blank page, “the computer,” “scientific brain,” “the solitary scientist,” “the sponge”—“children are like sponges absorbing everything”); all of which have frozen the nature of the learner into a kind of stasis where transitions and transformations are minimized in favor of a finished, static, and absolutist conception of knowing. The systematic fragmentation of the human and social disciplines, in part due to functional pragmatism, has divided and diminished the possibilities of making creative connections with the issues of people while appropriating and manipulating the social, economic, and political contacts of people. Pragmatism has become an instrument for the social control of ideas and interpretations that, in the name of democracy and the science of knowledge, has created pedagogies and academic contexts for dominant classes, prerequisite for economic development, where the human being is considered a capital resource for the current forms of production. The criterion is “efficiency,” the method is “behavior conditioning or management,” and “didactics” as the most important means for knowledge construction. The methods and techniques that any teacher can ever use are elaborated at the power centers, considering teachers, educators, and those involved in education as dependents of models and mediations which are expelled from everyday realities. Both problems—the metaphors and the fragmentation of knowledge—must be reflected upon and transformed.

As Freire pointed out, universities are generally institutions of knowledge transference and information depositories. This transference favors those, whose epistemological perspective considers knowledge a favorable product, where more information makes one more powerful, a parallel position to those who possess more economic resources. From the Vygotskian perspective, in order to defeat current educational and societal inequities, the study of psychology must provide the tools for understanding the power that cultural heritage has over biological heritage. The

question that we might ask is: how can we achieve an approach that brings them (our students) to our conflict of educational settings in order to reinvent their ideas from our practical location in a world that has built “literacies of power”?—to use Macedos’ words (1994).

Two Wonderful Life Histories: Similar in the Difference

One of the most authentic ways to understand people is to know of their lives as social beings: their hopes, desires, doubts, questions, devotions, dreams, and ideological and social location. Two men who lived in different historical times, one during the beginning of the twentieth century and the other during the mid-twentieth century, from two different cultures, different languages, different religions, different models of government, it shared a similar democratized vision of the world and contributed to that hope. Looking across their contextual differences we begin to discern a shared dynamics. For example, the parents of both held certain rank in their respective fields of work, their mothers were a dedicated house worker and teacher, and both families shared in a strong sense of pride. Freire married and remarried to teachers; Lev’s mother was a teacher and his wife worked with handicapped children. Both developed their talents in poetry, writing, literature, and expanded their respective fields of work by being dissident or deviating from the mainstream. They felt the need for new challenges that traditional education did not provide to them. Both were considered atypical kinds of intelligences.

Another parallel between them is the enormous criticism of their own work and the constant questioning about the origin of their thought. Both were postulating the following: the organism is completely humanized at birth, but not yet humanized until internalization of culture and social-political identity is forged. Both studied law, but ended up as teachers and leaders in education and public policy. Freire studied philosophy, psychology, anthropology, and linguistics. Vygotsky on his part revolutionized the field of psychology and neurology that, at the time, were immersed in mentalist and naturalistic views of the mental processes reducing the person to a simple physical and unexplainable entity. He also studied art and drama, and worked as an elementary teacher in theater education (Arias-Beatón, 2005). Freire inspired the world of social action and educational policy by affirming that literacy corresponds to the location in society of individuals who are prevented from reading their worlds.

Vygotsky: His Drama as Human Was His Cause as Scientist

From the many biographical and analytic works written about Vygotsky, I consider Pablo Del Rfo and Amelia Alvarez’s³ among the finest accounts. In their paper they analyzed Vygotsky’s writings—specifically those about literature, plays, art—suggesting the existence of a dialectical link between his life, his insights

into the dramatic organization of mind, and his interpretation of his own life fish and a trajectory as a mission in the development of a critical psychological approach. Based on the dramatic organization of the mind as advanced by Vygotsky, del Río and Alvarez (2007) make references to the links between psychological directive functions and the processes involved in the attribution of sense to personal and social activity and life projects, too often excluded from psychological research.

Lev Vygotsky sought justice for children, the handicapped, and the mentally retarded. He sought a more creative and ethical position for psychology. His political positions obscured his popularity among psychologists of the time, making Vygotsky's ideas especially critical and practical. The central thesis of his theory affirms: mind is a function, a human property, the human mind is social; such that the solution of enigmas are to be looked at, not in the soul, nor in biology, but in the history of society (Lucci, 2006; Arias-Beatón, 2004). By looking at the most significant events in his life we can understand Vygotsky's thought and personality. He was born to a middle class Jewish family in 1896 in the Byelorussia Republic. His father was an executive of the United Bank of Gomel, his mother, a licensed teacher. His family suffered from repression in the pre revolutionary Russia for being Jews. He received primary education at home with a private tutor, a mathematician, who engaged Lev into a humor, affective, and Socratic type dialogues. Throughout his life Vygotsky expressed great love for the theater and poetry. Besides German and Russian, he read and spoke Hebrew, French, English, Latin, Greek, and Esperanto (Blanck, 1992). His interests in theater, history, and philosophy were thus integrated, and Arias (2005) asserts that his passion for a revolutionary thought in psychology is more understood in the light of his intense studies and writings in liberal and fine arts.

He was admitted to the Moscow University after passing the examinations with a gold medal, which he thought was good luck because without the honors, he would not enter for being a Jew. His interests in history and philosophy led him to a teaching career, but as a Jew he could not be employed by the government, so he entered medical school. After 1 month, he transferred to law school. At age 18, he studied simultaneously at Moscow and at Shaniavsky People University. In 1917 Vygotsky graduated simultaneously from both universities and returned to his hometown where he worked as a teacher, thanks to the abolition of anti-Semitic legislation. By age 20 he had written many works on the history of psychology, and his first work was on defectology. He also taught literature and Russian at the Labor School, at adult schools, and teacher education courses at the Worker's Faculty. At the same time, he taught courses in logic, and psychology at the Pedagogical Institute, in aesthetics and art history at the Conservatory, and in theater at a studio. In 1919 the Vygotsky family suffered from hunger and tuberculosis. Despite his bout with tuberculosis, Lev continued working. Four years later he married Rosa Noevna, a bright and sensitive woman who dedicated 16 h a day to taking care of handicapped children (Blanck, 1992). Rosa and her work were probably an inspiration for him to dedicate more time, truly profound reflection, on the theme of what is now called special education, or *defectology*.

His concerns with education and learning were among his major focuses, heading the Section of Defective and Retarded Children for the Department of Public Education being the first director (in 1925) of the Psychology Laboratory for Abnormal Childhood in Moscow. In the spring of 1934, at age 37, he suffered his final bout with tuberculosis; his final manuscripts were published in 1935. Shortly thereafter, and due to Stalin's systematic persecution of intellectuals, the Gretchky's writings remained banned for 20 years. Vygotskian's writings identified and articulated the need for an epistemological transformation in the fields of psychology, and in education. He had the goal to find a biological and material explanation to the power of culture over the conscious, arriving to the continuity between functionalistic evolutionism and history-cultural evolutionism (Del Río & Alvarez, 2007). The timeliness of Vygotskian work is born out by the fact that he discovered the interconnections between social cultural processes taking place in society and mental processes taking place in the individual. He was an innovator in psychology and a visionary for the education of all children.

Paulo Freire: The Power of Risk and Hope

The academic world still mourns his death, while also celebrating his life and legacy. Freire's thought is the product of his sociohistoric context. His well-known masterpieces, *Pedagogy is a Practice of Freedom* and *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, cannot be understood nor critiqued without blinking their content to the Brazilian context of the 1960s. Both books draw their central ideas from that context which characterized for data and his conceptualizations. Freire's ideas drew much attention and currency throughout his adult life, and very particularly during the 1970s with the social strife that characterized much of the world and especially Latin America. The Paulo Freire Institute, Sao Paulo, under the direction of Moacir Gadotti, has published *Paulo Freire: a Bio-bibliography*, which represents the most complete bibliography of the writings of Freire, with 46 collaborators around the world. His biography, in the cited source, was written in four voices: his widow, Ana María Araújo, a collaborator of Moacir Gadotti, a Latin American biographer, Carlos Alberto Torres, and a European biographer, Heinz Peter Gerhardt (Ordóñez Peñalozzo, 1997).

He was born to a military policeman, a religious spiritist, and a catholic woman. His family suffered deep economic depression in 1929 leaving them to experience profound hunger and the pain that they shared with others. This difficult and dramatic time was exacerbated by the fact that his teachers considered him a mentally retarded. Notwithstanding, payday started studies in law school, as no school in his town offered careers and education. He read from basic Brazilian literature and foreign writers; he studied philosophy and language psychology. At age 20, he confessed his disillusionment with the Catholic Church, but never with God. At age 23 he married Elza Maria Costa, a teacher and later a school principal, and the mother of his five children. Lady was more interested in education, sociology, and philosophy than law. In order to convince himself that law was not his vocation,

he worked organizing seminars for adults and marginalized workers. He worked as a director for the Education and Culture Department, teaching courses at the School for Social Service, was a member of the Education Board, and director of the Culture and Recreation Department of Recife. In 1959 he obtained a doctorate degree in philosophy and history of education. He developed his methods and learned very early the problems of traditional education: it manipulates students instead of liberating them. His literacy method led the illiterate to read and write as well as democratizing the culture. After the state of siege in 1964, the military government destroyed 20,000 literacy projects, and Freire was jailed for 70 days, three but condemned and forced to leave his country. He escaped to Bolivia and later lived in Chile with his family. He traveled to the United States, Geneva in Switzerland, and in many other parts of Europe, Africa, Asia, the Pacific, and Latin America—except Brazil. In 1980 he returned to Sao Paulo, Brazil, where he worked as a university professor until 1990. In 1986, 2 years after the death of his wife, he remarried to educator, Ana María Araújo. His political and social lives were filled with fieldwork, interviews, culture groups, and curriculum development for all people, but particularly the dispossessed. Paulo Freire died on May 1st (Workers Day) shortly before he could materialize an invitation to the nursery of fourth vehicle where he was to be the guest speaker at a national conference on education. During the same semester I was attending a seminar on the subject of Freire's contributions to Latin American educational thought, presented by professor of philosophy and education, Jacinto Ordoñez Peñalongo, from Costa Rica. The seminar fueled my emotions with the power of Freire's prolific and persuasive ideas, especially his ability to nourish the moral political commitment of innumerable groups and institutions on all continents.

Some of Their Legacies: Zones of Possibilities and Defeats

Among the many connections one can make of both Lev's and Paulo's lives maybe the most important is the struggle for self-criticism, the struggle to be more common in order to reinvent their respective fields. Both were forging and defining what we today call "critical psychology" and "critical pedagogy." Both have proclaimed that ideology matters, and Vygotsky's work in human psychology contributed profoundly toward that end. Paulo Freire and Lev Vygotsky were highly influenced by Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, and Frederick Hegel. Their views on the nature of work in the transformation of human activity became starting points for the evolution of their ideas. Freire and Vygotsky's writings in critical pedagogy and critical psychology provoke in readers to move from lineal reasoning to a complex paradigm of interpretations.

In the beginning of the twentieth century (1924–1934), Vygotsky elaborated a complex theoretical construction of the social historical origin of human mental functions—specifically the superior mental functions, or executive functions of mind (see Rodríguez Arocho, 2000). He was convinced that the origin of what we call conscience is embedded with the historical and cultural blueprint of individuals,

and that psychological research must recognize this in order to interpret learning and development. It was also a claim that a pedagogical practice based on sociohistorical premises makes possible the critical positioning of teachers when questioned, and problematizing purposes and goals of education. Both Vygotsky and Freire converged with respect to the idea of the social-historical roots of human actions and political means. Both disciplines, psychology and education, affirmed, respectively, the need to question their premises and dominant discourse understanding that failing to do so would mean that institutions like education would do little more than maintain the social and political order.

For Freire and Vygotsky, the thinking nature of humans serves them to control, direct, and dominate their context. But they also highlighted the drama of life's motives. Freire, for example, wrote about a radical love that is compassionate, erotic, creative, sensual, and informed: "If critical pedagogy is not injected with a healthy dose of 'radical love' then it will operate only as a shadow of what it could be."⁴ This is the very political dimension of humans that can direct cognition. The union of felt-thought spirit not only is the genesis for leadership and governments, but also becomes the possibility for cultural action to be perceived and acted upon as a strategy for mainstreaming the domination of some groups over others, resulting in a violent version of reality. In doing so, the right subordinates science and technology to its own ideology, using this to disseminate information and prescriptions in its efforts to adjust the people to a reality that the media communicates and defines as legitimate and acceptable. Both of them proclaim the possibility of having reflective pedagogical practices that can be transformed not by chance, but conscious that our actions and emotions create cultural and concrete products such as alternative curricula, books, readings, activities, and attitudes.

Using Vygotsky's framework, Moll and Greenberg (1992) argued that education is never neutral nor passive. One creates meaningful connections between the academic and social life through the concrete learning activities of the students. The social connections help teachers and students to develop an awareness of how they can use everyday experiences to understand content (information) from curriculum and intentions (underlying power structure) to gain a broader appreciation of their own reality and location in the world. The concept of the zone of proximal development is usually introduced in relation to Vygotsky's concerns with the instruction of psychological testing, or as a part of a broader discussion of the relationship of learning and development. And, in fact, he developed the concept of zones as a critique and intentional option to static, individual testing, namely IQ testing, claiming that such static and artificial measures assess mental functioning that has already matured or fossilized. Maturing or developing mental functions then must be fostered and assessed through collaborative entities, not independent or isolated ones. Many tests and other by-products, in support of the standardization and normalization of human capacities, do not translate into higher functioning and more holistic learnings. Such a philosophy of human development has resulted in the manipulation and medication of children in the United States, including Puerto Rico, which is five times higher than that of the rest of the world;

not to mention the profound social, cultural, and emotional damage that such a philosophy and its related practices are inflicting on the lives of so many youth. Likewise, Freire's philosophy and work with literacy, particularly among peasant and adult populations, also underscored the need to contextualize our notions of knowing and how relations of power were related to the definitions of our capacities.

Goals to (E)Motionally Direct the Process of Knowing and Liberation

In both writers' perspective, the critical dimension of the consciousness accounts for the goals men and women assign to their transforming acts upon the world. Because they are able to have goals, human beings alone are capable of entertaining the result of their action even before initiating the proposed action that is never neutral. The following quote has been found in many writings of Freire and Vygotsky (*The act of reading . . . Pedagogy of the Oppressed, The Politics of Education . . . Mind and Society*):

We presuppose labor in a form that stamps it as exclusively human. A spider conducts operations that resemble those of a weaver, and a bee puts to shame many as architect in the construction of her cells. But what distinguishes the worst architect from the best of the bees is this: that the architect raises his/her structure in imagination before she erects it in reality. (Karl Marx, In Vygotsky's, 1978, p. 15)

They both agreed in their interpretations. Although bees, as expert specialists can identify the flower they need to make honey, they do not vary their specialization; so they cannot produce by-products. Their action upon the world is not accompanied by objectification; it lacks the critical reflection that characterizes human tasks. Whereas animals adapt themselves to the world to survive, human begins modify the world in order to be more.

Along the path of his preoccupations as a psychologist, Vygotsky considered his initial concerns with morality, ethics, and the emotions in himself, to those in the drama of psychology. His research allowed him to affirm that the psychology is drama, but the conscience is dramatic, that the unit of analysis of psychic life is the unit of analysis of art and the sciences. He has been faithful in that trajectory to the maximum of the philosophy of Spinoza⁵ and discussed Damasio in his books on the emotional brain—where the rational and emotional should not be separated along parallel lines: he has dedicated himself to look for reason as passion, “where algebra is converted into theory.” His mind as a researcher is enriched by the scientific fervor of the times and his socialist militancy compelled him to see that he could not arrive at the heart of emotions without paying tribute to reason, but he could not reach the human heart of arts without passing through the science of what was human. In many of his books, Freire distances himself from a dense and academic language to speak with the soul, with the visceral voice of one who struggles, in love and full of utopian hope—impossible dream. In his work, *Letters to Those who Dare Teach*,

he speaks of themes that are, in nature, affective: Pedagogical traps, the fears that paralyze reflection–action cycles, personal qualities of teachers, cultural identity, relationships with students, among many others.

Culture, Learning, and History

What human beings are constructing, modifying, and reinventing is what we call culture. This implies that culture is not simply an entity of independent individuals with which we must transact. Humans are internalized culture; they assume the culture. Culture, the accumulation of humankind’s historical legacy outside the boundaries of the organism, is interiorized as mental activity, thus becoming part of the person. Cultural and human functions are historical phenomena in practice; and as such a basic unit for the study of psychological processes and practical activities. This idea, taken from Hegel by way of Marx and Engels, is basic to what Vygotsky called the “cultural method” of thinking. The dialectic relation among the human being and nature takes new and complex paths when humans modify nature and create, due to those changes and modifications, new conditions for their existence (Vygotsky, 1995a). What we humans create or invent, we do it as a cultural act.

And so, no human activity escapes the social system, which involves the struggles, the fights, and inequities of any given society. This piece of argument leads us to the discussion of the cultural method, which as I see it, sometimes is absent in many interpretations of Vygotsky’s point of view, and should be rescued from the amnesia of a contemporary psychology. In Freire, the conflictive and complex social-political dimensions of human relations are always present. In his words, culture is not an autonomous nonneutral system of beliefs and behaviors, but a system characterized by social stratification and tension. It is connected to social relations, those of domination and forms of dependencies; culture involves power and help to produce asymmetries in the abilities of individuals and social groups to define and realize their needs and stand by their voices.

Human development is regulated biologically through a neurological duration; cultural heritage becomes the enrichment and utilization of biological possibilities working through human processes such as thought, action, and affection (in Zambrana, 2001). In these processes, their relations with others in historical moments are vital. Human learning and knowledge production, therefore, presuppose specific social situations and locations, and as such a process by which learners engage in the literacy experience of those who make their context. Using Vygotsky’s framework, Arias-Beatón (2005) (original study is Gutierrez, López, & Arias, 1990) presented interesting findings on schooling, development, social conditions, physical and medical growth, health and the material conditions for life, among others, from a sociohistorical-cultural perspective. Based on the data provided in the study, the researchers argue that cultural mediation helps to understand the human biological development, and also serves as the foundation for the psychological development. The biological heritage is the mechanism through which humanity is being reproduced, while cultural heritage is the mean through which

intelligence, personality, the conscience, and the very complex forms of the being are reproduced.

Permanent Process in Their Dynamic Conceptions of Being Human: Cultural Action and (E)Motional Mediation

Freire and Vygotsky agreed on the concept of a permanent and dynamic process for reality transformation through cultural action. Freire also defined this process as a never-ending search to be more; Vygotsky, on his part, demanded amplitude without eclecticism or dogmatism but with flexibility and continuity. An examination of Vygotsky's work suggests a methodology that is broad as well as objective, productive, and dynamic, which includes all the procedures that lead to sensible knowledge and which states the facts and allows us to transform reality. Referred to as culture-historical and genetic psychology, Vygotsky's sociocultural approach to psychology establishes clearly the starting points and the logical frameworks for scientific reasoning, without sacrificing objectivity. Thus, human activity is both practical and theoretical, playing an important role in the formation of human thought. Human activity, and therefore, its thought, has a social nature. Consequently, we can claim that history plays a fundamental role in psychology.

Tools and signs mediate Vygotsky's claims to higher psychological functions such as attention, perception, memory, and thought. This theme is grounded partly in the ideas of Engels on the role of tools in nominalization, but its elaboration reflects Vygotsky's lifelong interest in semiotics, linguistics, and literacy analysis. The fundamental claim here is that human activity in both planes, interpsychological and intrapsychological, can be understood only if we take into consideration the technical tools and psychological tools or signs that mediate this activity. As a complement to this conceptualization of the human being, Freire expressed that cultural action, conscious or unconsciously, serves either domination or freedom. Both dialectically antagonistic are processed from within the social structure, resulting in a permanent change. That is, permanent or virtue of it being dialectical. Some might ask, why does education fail? A part of the answer may be discovered in the dialectical nature of our human condition.

In Wertsh's words, at the more advanced levels of Vygotsky's hierarchy, the protagonist is the conscious with its two components: the intellect and affectivity. Vygotsky's writings compel us to include both components if we expect to portray and deliver a complete conception of consciousness. This is made manifest in the following quote from Vygotsky's 1934 book, *Myshlenie I rech': Psikhologicheskie issledovaniya* [Language and thought: psychological research], in Wertsh (1988, pp. 197–198):

To separate the intellectual side of our conscious from its affective side is one of the fundamental mistakes of traditional psychology. Because of this, thinking is inevitably transformed into an autonomous flow of ideas that can be thought (by them). In this way, thought is separated from the wholeness of real life, from the life motives, from interests and the attractions of the intelligent human being.

Although Vygotsky did emphasize the role of emotions and the affective dimension of the process of thinking, his personal suffering contributed to the development of a more dramatic position. Almost poetic, in expressing in his writings on the importance of affectivity in the mental activity, two of his more artistic writings, *Hamlet's Tragedy* and *Psychology of Art*, interpreted and analyzed by the Spaniard psychologists Amelia Álvarez and Pablo del Río,⁶ signaled evidence of a personal and emotional imprint in his work. Having analyzed and interpreted some of Vygotsky's arguments and proposals about the social formation of mind and thought, I can conclude that his primary statement about affectivity is related to how emotions provide an integrated and motivational strength to consciousness.

Street Pedagogy: Connections in a Happily Surprising Place

We stumble upon reality every day... even though we don't recognize it, it is consequently a daily thing that lives with our contradictions and is displaced among our discourses. When appreciated, it educates us.

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At this point I would like to share some vignettes with you about what happened to me 10 years ago in Boston, Massachusetts. I entered to a hair salon to get a manicure without appointment, it was probably around 9AM. As I stepped in, Dominican "merengue" music was coming from a "cocolera" (a Puerto Rican word for a small boom box stereo). Two women were speaking in Spanish (my first language). I asked:

- Ustedes hacen uñas? "Do you do nails?" (the sign didn't indicate so).
- "Yes," answered one woman.

"Be Honest: Educate"

I asked one of the women for her professional advice: I showed her my broken nails and she said:

- "You might want your nails mended, uh? But that's kind of dangerous . . . see, if you want that you should go to another place where they put on acrylic, . . . we don't do acrylic here because it can cause fungus in your natural nail. We do the manicure and treatment on your natural nail."
- I said: "I want them to look nice and clean."
- "You have to cut and nail them. See, I feel that I have to educate my clients. I can't allow a client to get an infection. Listen, I have had this business for 12 years and I don't want to jeopardize my reputation and my good name. The good service is more important than the money, and I know people like you are honest and respond well when told the consequences and the truth."

She had a very interesting discourse with many remarks, examples, truths, and insights that connected with her voice as a professional; what she felt was the honest thing to do with her services. She gave me the advice, and the option to go another place. Guess what I did?

Death Penalty: What for?

In the same scenario, another woman, reacting to the news that was on the television in the parlor, brought up the topic of the broadcast to our attention:

- “Hey, did you realize that the death penalty was approved in Massachusetts yesterday? They approved it, but the voting was close: 81–79. This is terrible; even in other places they are proposing to have it as a law to stop crime.”

I questioned them, about the nature of the death penalty as a deterrent to capital crime. “I asked: “But what about the families of the victims?”

- “I don’t think that by killing the murderer I get back my relative! That’s hate”!

What a good, simple, and clear analysis. She used the proper language, one that allowed her to organize her thoughts to name reality. She had “political clarity.” She even mentioned possibilities to rehabilitate people with “jobs and hard work” in order to become “better citizens,” as she put it.

Being a Mother vs Been a Wife

The manicurist arrived. As she was preparing her tools, she was having a sandwich. The owner said:

- “She is feeding herself and she is expecting so we need to wait a little.” Once I sat, I asked the woman about the baby: “This is my second child; I have a four year old son. I live with the father of my kid and this one too, but I don’t plan to marry him.”
- “I have been living with him for five years but I don’t want to marry him because you never know when they are going to change, and so I feel more in control like this. He is good, we are OK and stable but no way. I cannot know if he is going to be there for ever, plus I am young, I prefer to raise my kids, even alone, but not to get married. It will take long . . . I have to see as time passes; maybe I will get married by a justice of the peace. I am catholic, but I will marry through the church when I see that the relationship remains stable.” She was clearly establishing differences in both roles, because each role (mother/wife) implied different power relations, and she we able to “see” that.

Solidarity Takes Two: The Dialectical Relation of Love

The owner was explaining to the other employees that she would rent a space to a recently graduated cosmetologist and offer her the opportunity to have her clients. “I will rent her the space I am not using. I cannot pay her a salary because I don’t know how many clients she will have; but I can give her an opportunity. Here it is not easy to get started, and even more with these politics of reducing and cutting helps . . . I must give her an opportunity, she is starting and needs a head start to establish a name on her own.” These women were talking from their political and social location; they managed their discourses with political clarity and ideological understanding.

The women in these stories were two Puerto Ricans born in the United States: a Dominican who migrated many years ago, and myself, a native Puerto Rican female. The women could clearly read their world, even though they were not sharing the prestige and recognition of academia. The personal connection embedded in these stories added to the development of the dialogues and speak for a critical pedagogy that was taking place, not by mere repetition of ideas but as a result of reflection, political clarity about power and class resulting in reinvention of thought and action. This reinvention must be goal oriented, with passion and location in history and time, and social cultural context; to take a stand and commit to a message that can be embraced, problematized, and transformed by those living it. As Freire and Vygotsky believed, languages are the real thing of culture; it can be the land of domination as well as of possibilities.

Within the stories that I’ve read about Freire and Vygotsky there remained many common points of dialogical complicity, specifically those that reflect a political and language clarity born of meaningful expressions and an ideological reading of their history. Let us review the politicization of the people in the vignettes: for instance, the woman who shared her reality of preferring being a mother to a wife. She sees the possibility of becoming an abused wife, and decided to choose a situation where she has more control of her own life. And what about the woman that chose to talk and take a stand on her opinion about the cruel and unproductive punishment of the death penalty? She read what the literature stated without quoting a single reference, or any known authority on the matter. She was, indeed empowered, declaring that such a mandate is not a wise solution to crime. The owner impressed me with her discourse on solidarity, struggle, connections with, and an awareness of “the other”, and the extensive lesson on being honest, hardworking, and compassionate; not to mention her intuitively and well-developed education and ease to communicate. These women, for instance, used correct words when they talked about issues of class and gender. They never referred to the marginalized or poor or inmate, as the underprivileged. The use of such terms distances the speaker from the object that is being talking about by separating their realities.

Traditional educational settings advocate a pseudo-dialogical model, creating in turn, a rigid methodology. Having been reduced to the logic of transmitter and receiver of information, such an understanding of dialogue does not make possible the affirmation of the other and only serves to underscore the distance and alienation

of those engaged in the communicative encounter. I would like to affirm that political clarity can be discovered on the streets resulting in a political praxis that allows all of us to better read and share meanings to understand and transform misery and the suffering.

Street Pedagogy Reveals Who Is Educated: More Stories

A year ago, I received an e-mail with pictures from a former student, a native of Italy, Fabio Cristallini. He sent me a collection of pictures entitled *Genius of engineering*. Looking for inspiration, and having just recently read one of Thomas Alba Edison's aphorisms (that states): "If we would do all the things we are able to do, we would be amazed at ourselves." I contemplated the images of people making sense of their tiny spaces, being creative with transportation and their lives. It was all like a course in physics, sociology, and a reinvention of the self. These images reaffirmed for me that utopias are possible and that imagination is a powerful tool. These persons had realized experiments in physics that with their creativity and necessity had managed to overcome the unexplainable by carrying huge loads of cargo while riding bicycles. These images make me reflect upon our contributions to the sciences, to human necessities, to the artistic and scientific concepts in our postmodern and neoliberal world. I wanted to begin with this anecdote since it portrays exactly what I mean by street pedagogy. The nature of nature itself is not as complicated as we make it. We can approach a philosophical problem in such a complicated fashion that we end up not thinking with clarity. And yet, we abandon the sole idea of thinking about how nature is and its processes; and how daily, we find ourselves within our squandering nature itself.

With neoliberalism, the optics of what is good pedagogy takes other forms, other routes, and other ends. By definition, neoliberalism proposes that human well-being can be best advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills with an institutional framework characterized by strong rights to private property, free markets, and free trade. The role of the state is thus meant to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). It is no longer a matter of street wisdom that he is my proposal in this chapter. What street pedagogy or the pedagogy of the street is the demand of a perspective that is politically centered and comes from those that live in the very convulsive or happy world, that have made their reflections and critical reviews, virtues and the defects of society.

The historical cultural focus to which Vygotsky referred has presented itself as a stupendous epistemological remedy for the form by which the mind is conceived of and studied, and likewise forms of learning. The materialistic conceptualization of history developed by Karl Marx guided the revolutionary process in the works of these intellectuals. It is widely documented that Vygotsky and Freire derived their conceptualization of the conscience from Marxist philosophy, and from here expressed that the conscience represents the most advanced form of mental

development [psyche=soul] including as much the sensory forms of the apprehension of reality as the superior mental processes that define its social essence. This essence reflects the social necessities and the forms of structure and functionality of social life. The conscious itself, reasoning, volition, and emotions, that we consider distinctive traits of our human condition and attributes of the individual mind, are distillations of our social life (Guryev, 1990). Emotions, of those previously mentioned, in addition to giving us a human sense, are also part of a complex physiological and neurological dynamics, and that being biologically regulated, have an adaptive function. From this perspective, the conscious is “the supreme level of the mental reflection of objective reality, inherent exclusively to human beings by virtue of their social historical essence.” (Petrovsky & Yaroshevsky, 1987, p. 60).

Small Wonders from Normal People and the Power of Experience: The Struggle for Vieques from the Soul of My Family

On August 12, 2002, my friend and husband, Jaime Negrón, trespassed the U.S. Naval military property on the island municipality of Vieques in Puerto Rico. This transgression occurred in the context of a protest where the entire nation of Puerto Rico, led predominantly by pro-independence factions, struggled against the use of the access for U.S. Naval military war games and exercises. On April 19th of the same year, while offering the eulogy at the funeral of an independentist militant at a cemetery in Vieques (also called *la Isla Nena*), the president of the Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP), Rubén Berrios Martínez, rhetorically asked, “until when will the people of the etiquette’s tolerate the abuse of the U.S. Navy? Until they’ve killed a ‘*vieques*?’” (in Ortiz Ramos, 2000). That same afternoon a security guard on the island of Vieques, David Sanes Rodríguez, was killed by a 500 pound bomb fired from a USN F-18 warplane while working at the Cerro Matías observation post belonging to the U.S. Navy. Death of the independentista militant was the result of a cancer related to chemical toxic waste materials belonging to the U.S. Navy and the use of such materials in their military exercises. Both deaths were caused by the militarization of reactors. They were not the first, by any stretch of historical documentation. Many Puerto Ricans from Vieques have suffered directly or indirectly from the militarization of the island municipality.

None of these deaths is isolated; they occur within a context: for more than 60 years the people of the actors have suffered the violations of their human rights, at best tolerating the presence of the U.S. Navy, one in 1941, during World War II, the Vieques was forcefully expropriated and handed over to the U.S. Navy taking approximately 78.8% of the island municipality’s total area and leaving what was left for its civilian inhabitants.⁷ The annexionist and colonialist governments of Puerto Rico never proposed that the U.S. Navy leave Vieques. Though the interest of the United States has never been with Puerto Ricans, instead with Puerto Rico as a geopolitical bastion, the governments of put the vehicle have adopted positions

that accommodate such policies without remedy. There have been many activists from the Vieques and throughout Puerto Rico who for decades have denounced and struggled against the aggravation brought about by U.S. military presence: the lack of economic development, the lack of agricultural development, the lack of the development of tourism, restrictions imposed upon the fishing industry, the detrimental and destructive effects of contamination (water, air, and land), the dangers of “casual” deaths, the unhealthy noise and violence of a company militarization anywhere, among others. In spite of the pain and sadness of his death, David and the many that have died of cancer, managed to awaken the long awaited desires for peace and well-being that the people of Vieques deserve.

Hundreds of *independentistas*, led by Ruben Berríos, and many hundreds of other militants from Vieques and the rest of Puerto Rico trespass the Navy’s “property” in some of the most impressive demonstrations of civil disobedience in the history of our country. Jaime, my husband, was detained and arrested in August 2000; and incarcerated for 42 days without a trial notice. The federal judge, a Puerto Rican assigned to the case, asked him and his lawyer repeatedly to accept a bail set at \$1,000 or face incarceration. Assuming the position of anti-colonialist, Jaime did not recognize U.S. legal jurisdiction in this case. His was not an isolated instance: many independentistas refused to pay the bail and were incarcerated without notice of a trial.

Vieques and its tragedy transformed many people’s ideas about the U.S. presence in Puerto Rico, the hidden agenda of military power, the colonialism, and so on. The portrayals of images in the media of people in Vieques: women, children, other youth, workers, fishermen, community leaders, a lyrical leaders, teachers, religious and nonreligious Puerto Rican from all walks of life in struggle catapulted the nation into a real-life novel. This real-life novel covered by all the mass media became a wake-up call for the majority of the population who then saw and listened red and talked freely and openly about colonialism, political issues and relations with the United States, and the prospects for decolonization. The introduction of these topics usually spearheaded by *independentistas*, were now more open to a broader context and field of participation and discussion. The struggle in Vieques even became the team and central topics for many lectures and homilies in churches of all denominations in Puerto Rico. When interviewed on national television in front of the U.S. federal court in San Juan, only hours after her son had been arrested, my mother-in-law expressed:

It doesn’t strike me as strange what my son has done, I feel proud . . . In spite of the pain of his imprisonment—we have taught our children to be good Christians, the values of honesty, and sacrifice for their beliefs and convictions. I could expect no less from him, then that he defend his convictions of what is just and good for others, even though it pains me. It pains us, that he be jailed and separated from us from his wife and his one year old daughter.

Jaime’s mother did not sympathize with our political ideas, until she had to face that her son’s struggles were consistent with the values and ethics that they had taught him. Their moral education had unquestionably transformed a “criminal” acts into a morally correct one. Their reflection on the context of their son’s acts

compel them to be read with the world in a way far removed from their previous notions. They became critical. Granted, it would be naive if we were to assume that they radically changed their entire value system with no indication of apparent contradictions. The event did not transform their basic values, but it did open a window of possibility to see and know Puerto Rico's history, rewrite it, and reinterpret it by themselves as actors in that reconstruction. By the way, it bears mentioning, that she was a religion teacher. For her, to pronounce as she did, was to be in complete communion with her Christian beliefs and ethical values, that can go beyond the law, on behalf of social justice. Here, street pedagogy meets spiritual, ethical, moral, and religious values.

When normal people show that their basic convictions and sensibility and political clarity to connect daily events to those of the world at large, the potential to influence their children in another direction, one that may eventually converge, a kind of Freirean political clarity has been achieved, one that permits coexistence with contradiction. Unlike those that have spent much time in academia, late people are more able to move freely among ideas that might be interpreted as oppositional yet at heart, distinctively complementarity. That here we locate a formal critical basis for an understanding that the reading of the world, as Freire points out, is a truly revolutionary project, to which the utopian dimension is natural, a process in which people assume the role of subjects in the adventure of transforming and understanding their world and their role in the world. So when a conventional reading of the situation points toward opposing poles where the mother and son are found as oppositional, the critical interpretation of such a positioning is not understood as a widening of the ideological gaps between the two but to wreak in style that neutrality is not consequential . . . Again, the theme of conscience, as it relates to a level of contextualized mental reflection, is evidenced as inherent and exclusively human by virtue of humanity's historical-social essence and human emotions. And this revolutionary project with my family supposes a re-reading of reality, repositioning of conventional truths before issues of justice and the facing of different situations with valor and dignity, respecting and considering the possibility and differences in ideas.

The revolutionary project that took place in these times with my family supposes a rereading of reality, repositioning of conventional truth before justice issues and confront difficult situations with valor and dignity, respecting and considering other's ideas. This project, as Freire will posit, is distinguished from the rightist project not only by its objectives but also by its total reality. A project's method cannot be dichotomized from its content and objectives, as if methods were neutral and equally appropriate for liberation or domination. Such a concept reveals a naïve idealism that is satisfied with the subjective intention of the person who acts. For sure, the sun has no interest in that his parents change their political ideas, but he does expect that they understand the rupture that results from assuming a leftist position but not a break in understanding.

Jaime Negrón read his statement to the court himself in both English⁸ and Spanish, after 42 days in jail. The following is an example of how nonacademicians educate. Jaime shared a cell with an independentista friend, Manuel Rodríguez Orellana, who helped him translating his statement, because he wanted to use both

languages in the court. Here is where street pedagogy assumes its presence in the court house, in the form of a simple and honest discursive act:

Today I stand before this court of law whose moral authority to pass judgement over my acts I don't recognize. I do it, together with my three colleagues, in peaceful response to an accusation for which all of Puerto Rico has already passed judgement. I do it with the satisfaction of one who is fulfilling his duty. With the satisfaction of having received all those sincere displays of support and solidarity from my relatives, friends, all of the country, the rest of the prisoners and even some jail officers, the majority of which recognize that we were in jail as political prisoners and because of our conscience. We were in Vieques and at the jail, as we are here today, fulfilling the duty imposed by our principles. Principles that with the example and legacy given to us by Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. in their use of civil and peaceful disobedience, taught us the president of the Partido Independentista Puertorriqueño (PIP), Rubén Berríos Martínez. Principles that I, as well as other friends and colleagues from the PIP, and as part of a new generation, am defending here. I know that I have to confront a sentence for which I have already served some weeks. The full responsibility for the sentence that this court will impose on me and on many other independentistas for their struggle in favor of the Peace in Vieques will be carry by this institution with the moral burden given to it by the People of Puerto Rico who has passed judgement and that will hunt the US Navy until it leaves Vieques and our land. To conclude I want to bring to your attention the passage from the Ecclesiastes that says: "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven. . . a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace." To this it should be added: The time has come for the US Navy to go; and for the Island of Vieques, the time for peace has come. Jaime Negrón Landrón, September 13, 2000

The statement delivered by this man in court had one purpose: to leave clear that the speaker reaffirms his convictions even while in "hostile territory," in front of a Puerto Rican judge, leaving a colonial condition, and that concedes to the Empire's power, converting himself in an accomplice of futile legal actions where the legality of such actions is constantly questioned by the history and the dignity of those that turned the word "question" into a verb. A recently incarcerated men "without power," has the power to speak and pronounced himself—in his language and the language of the Empire—and to leave clearly understood that the decision to believe and struggle continues to be his, even if the decision to do "justice" be an another's hands. This is what Macedo (1994) called *emancipatory literacy*, That's social political activity realized by educators in disadvantaged situations that results in a great leap of the conscience toward the construction and transformation of transgressive imaginaries of reality, street pedagogy then accompanies the emancipation to the degree that the social actors manage an organic knowledge, articulated—in this case against an authority—freeing it with the word and a discourse in an action against power as ideological oppression. Another important dimension, more Vygotskian and Freirian in nature, is the power of cultural heritage, among youth and a new generation of Puerto Ricans who pronounce themselves as cultural workers of political struggle and resistance, who take history as a moral responsibility, with courage and hope.

After the arrests and convictions of hundreds of Puerto Ricans, politicians, educators, workers, women, men from diverse ideologies, including pro-statehood proponents, colonialists, independentistas, Vieques and its people continue to hope

for more than a small, a shy and legal, ethical effort directed at cleaning up the island of its contaminants. The proposed formula commonly referred to as the 4D plan includes: Devolución de tierras (Return of the land), Demilitarization, Decontamination, and holistic Development. Here street pedagogy took other “street contacts” such as community struggles, the federal courthouse, churches, the federal jail, and the media. And here the pedagogy was a course on life, and open-ended seminar-online, on TV, in newspapers—a social forum which mediated the dynamics of colonial ignorance and history forgotten. Vieques is and will continue to be one of our great political and civic lessons that remains silent and invisible in the history books used by the public schools or the private schools in Puerto Rico. And as sad as it may sound, it is also a suggestion of hope because in our Vygotskian and Freirean conception, history is possibility written and rewritten in cultural action, mediated by the systems of human semiotics—this national experience has left much clear and strong evidence, the fingerprints and footprints of the trails of contradictions overcome and those that remain, generational and iconographic imprints—that will be transmitted in many informal ways, in the best tradition of oral history by those thousands of persons provoked, supported, and sustained by the possibility of a healthier heritage and patrimony.

Learning from the Street: The Teacher’s Strike and Its Pedagogy

Another good scenario of authentic learning have been the labor strikes in Puerto Rico, much morning that the United States, because there remains a small but militant group of labor organizations that in different moments jolt the very fiber of all Puerto Rico. Strikes, as painful as they are, especially for those who sacrifice receiving a salary and doing their daily work, continue to be an affirmation that the real social crises continue to be our indifference and cowardly neutrality. Strikes are also an antidote to the routine of peoples and sections of society that conform to the comfort of inequalities, especially when these do not affect them directly. The great danger of this conformity is that it leaves one believing that struggles are unproductive, counterproductive, and dangerous to the economic stability of a people. This is the position of official discourses that have found their way into the spirit of many persons and that undermine the possibility of change and hope and many others, while in others it triggers a street pedagogy. And the behavioral fiber of institutional violence, since other social space is the theme of institutional violence, is more diligently attended and dealt with. That scenario-space is the street itself. Of those groups that more forcefully and directly attend to issues of institutional violence, and use the streets as a scenario for the dramatization of its struggles, teachers organizations and other educational workers stand out.

Spearheaded by the Teachers Federation of Puerto Rico (Federación de Maestros de Puerto Rico, FMPR) with an enrollment of some 40,000 members, in February of 2008 Puerto Rico witnessed an all-encompassing teachers strike. And for decades the Teachers Federation has been a combative and militants labor organization, very vocal in its request and demands and whose leadership has very articulately

and critically expressed itself in before the establishment. The politically tense and important struggles with this labor organization have been very notorious and on occasion much criticized. Interestingly, both major parties in Puerto Rico, when governing, have historically experienced difficult encounters with the organization. Even when appearing to embrace a solidarity with the Teachers Federation, the governments ended up imposing very damaging sanctions in the face of any real resistance from the Federation. An example of the tension is between the government and the Teachers Federation which facilitated the passage of Law 45. The colonial government in Puerto Rico passed this law under the pretense that such legislation would protect the rights of workers to organize themselves. Notwithstanding, the same law also took away from the workers their right to strike, and the same law left the Teachers Federation and all educators without a collective agreement for over 30 months; the reason for which the Teachers Federation decided to strike.

The struggle for an excellent public education is the struggle of all peoples that recognized the value of education in the economic and cultural life of any country. Governments with neoliberal ideas would have us believe that the markets reside at the margins of social responsibility, and that the society is paid for by virtue of the employment and economic activity they generate and that private industry has no relation to government, having us believe that the public and private are distinct localities in places, when they are not. In countries like mine where our economy is subordinated to the now-fragile and unstable economy of the United States, there exists a need for a practical discourse that might unite and localize the economy in the hands of the working people. The markets, and local private enterprises, like higher education need to be committed toward social and economic development, a development whose cycle favors the country and an improvement in the quality of life for the people; likewise for capital enterprises there is a need to be oriented toward the same objectives.

In the most fragile of terrains, but at the same time the most combative, the schools' interesting lessons should be searched. School climates were tense and demoralized. I have a brother and sister-in-law, both teachers, who were hurt during the process, and who in their own words expressed: "it was a pain shared by both sides of the conflict." Reflecting on the expressions I discovered the lesson: those with a net worth of faith on the struggle were moved by convictions and those that were not, were paralyzed by fear. Those that were not good base their actions and positions on the fear that had been imbued in them by the administration; others were confused; yet others very disillusioned and discouraged . . . And many of those who crossed the strike line assumed one of those or similar arguments. There is not such thing as a good moment for a strike, but it is a necessary strategy when confronted by a cause, because the major shortcoming of a people is one they succumb in the face of a crisis. But not all is negative during moments of crisis; that are, to my summation, turning points, necessary moments in human relations in history.

Another one of the lessons discovered in the schools was a solidarity among persons at different levels of the power relations hierarchy. My brother, who happens to be a teacher, and was on the front line of the strike told me: "Much of what is said is

negative, yet my school, the principal has been an ally . . . Not because he joins us, but because he respects us and our claims and as such has been very human . . . He has given us some smacks and he is never opted to confront us violently.” This is street pedagogy that neither the newspapers nor many academics talk about or talk to. It is the humanist I mention of the educational process; it is not easily measured quantitatively, but it teaches from the very center of its only expression, where reason and emotion are found and becomes the lecture, capable of calling in bringing together those that might find themselves in other levels of power.

Ethical and Political Dilemmas in Education: We Need More Street Pedagogy

Without a doubt, one of Paulo Freire’s most important contributions has been to demonstrate that the intellectual exercise of the universities also implies political action, “the political-historical determination of intellectual practice.” This compels the professor in multiple scenarios beyond that of just the classroom—to make decisions that affect others and herself. There are those who would forget the political dimension of education in the educational thought of Freire, thus romanticizing Freirean postulates and circumscribing only a nuanced relation between educator and educated. This was, without a doubt, one of the great contributions that irritated some and excited others. And what is precisely this relationship between educator and educated that is political in nature for it questions power without denying it. Today we hear of problematizing in the education everywhere. For example, I first learned about it when, for the first time, I read Freire in the 1980s. I say this because the relationships that he establishes between ethics and politics have been ignored. I remember that at the same time that I was reading *Freud on The discomfort—problema—of culture*, I was also reading Freire from his book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, and *Animal Farm* by George Orwell. The combination of these readings and a desire to make sense of my university life and the connections between text and discourse, extracurricular dialogues with others on the topics of Marx Engels, and historical materialism, all became very important for me because they became the terrain for the germinating of my “reasonable doubt” with respect to penning a critical education and official curriculum, with the possibility of understanding the world in political and critical terms being erased. Same mistake when trying to understand education and teaching having cognition divorced from emotions. There is not intellectual development without or outside the development of the person, the cultural individual.

That is why, frequently, we have to question the role that universities and professors play in relation to the society and the state, especially in relation to that which is commonly referred to as university autonomy or the public financing of higher education. Interestingly, it was a public university—in a country where 71% of the university student body studies in a private institution—that expressed and demonstrated its solidarity with the teachers gearing their strike. Freire responds that, at

the base of the question about the academic policy of a university there resides in the impossibility that academic policy not consider the history, the society, and political life of the people; in sum, its contexts. Vygotsky also dove into the life of politics in the academia when he enrolled simultaneously in Shaniavsky People's University, which was not considered unofficial school, characterized by the student body whose leadership led anti-Semitic protests. No university is viable, nor can it exist beyond or above the social and political system of the people within which it operates. This means that university policy always has as a point of reference the global system, is inclusive, and never neutral. The academia that declares itself neutral is ingenuous assuming that such a position is synonymous with being liberal. Those that declare themselves a neutral generally promote the neatest academic policies that are in character exclusivist and conformist.

Lessons to Learn: Today's Class Will Be at the Street

I will not go to school tomorrow. Said the girl to the reporter. I will be on the strike line. . . Like my mom in the struggle.

While the above was taken from an interview of a little girl in front of the Department of Labor in San Juan, Puerto Rico, it is there where the Teachers Federation and the secretary of education met in an attempt to reach an agreement. The child of some 10 years of age had exemplified her incipient activism which later the school would squash with its hidden curriculum. Though the schools should become places where we practice and generate ideas that question the world, it is precisely there where many illusions die and where the possibility of an emancipatory thinking among teachers and students is laid to rest. When the school becomes an instrument of silence where questioning is not encouraged, development is arrested. It is worth mentioning again the words with which this chapter began for it is literacy which in violent and insensitive contexts becomes a vehicle for liberation or one for psychological death.

First lesson: in unity there is strength. Some 30 months after having received a proposed collective agreement by a group of more than 20,000 teachers from the public school system, the Department of Education remains silent. The teachers of the public school system had no other alternative. They found their strength in their unity, and the strike became a reality.

Second lesson: important and meritorious causes deserved to be struggled for despite the deceptions. In spite of the many meetings to come to an agreement, the negotiations between union leaders and the secretary of education were quite balanced: one clause was approved for each week of stalemating. Both teachers and parents wanted to return to school, no one wanted to be on the streets being denied their salary for their days in the strike, but it was a decision some made.

Third lesson: the Department of Education and its leadership respond to the political interests of the forces in power. The expressions of the secretary of

education were that the agreement would be approved after the general elections in November—10 months more than the 30 months that the teachers had already lived demanding a resolution to their claims about working without an agreement—a situation that left the Teachers Federation in a very difficult position.

Fourth lesson: those that have much hope always postpone their own gratifications for the common good. The struggles ventilated on the streets were the result of unsuccessful attempts to dialogue and negotiate, the struggles that teach and nourish the sustainability of the society. Without solidarity we are finished as a social group, without the ties of correspondence there is no inner action, there is no debate, there is no opportunity to reinvent oneself. It is sad that those who know most what is needed in the classroom—teachers—are those who are most vulnerable individually and collectively. And so the need for solidarity is fundamental.

I remember how in August of 2007, in a conference I gave sponsored by the community foundation of Puerto Rico on a plan for school improvements as articulated by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) public law, the secretary of education entered to greet the teachers. He entered flanked by corporate leaders and various media photographers. It was a most opportune time for them for two reasons: I was introducing the theme of strategies for ludic teaching that would combine the necessities of the learners and the educators to share a fertile terrain of ideas and wanted to comment on the situation of schools in the wake of the new NCLB law. Not ethically nor politically could I allow to pass such an opportunity to contextualize my presence there and express my solidarity with the teachers and let them know that they could either allow the schools to fall in the hands of that law or in their own hands, reminding them that historically the resistance of educators—and those flanks—be it the street, in the classroom, or in the communities, have been the generating force behind the gains in many of our social and political struggles. Obviously the audience was already connected to the idea that it would not renounce its power to struggle collectively with the possibility of a living hope. Then, after the usual cordial greetings, various teachers asked the secretary of education questions pointing to the positions that so many teachers and teacher leaders had raised about the collective agreement which at that time had been 12 months on the negotiation table—with the petitions there exposed and before the secretary of education and all to see. This exchange does not occur in a vacuum, given that the secretary requested the names of the schools and teachers that contested the conditions under which they worked. These teachers did so and reminded the secretary of education of the many broken promises. They asked questions about the size of their classes and other themes. In the end, the activity became a small forum for the secretary of education—that during this space of my conference became one of the better moments of the day for such an intervention. The theme of a collective agreement was on everyone's mind and on everyone's tongues because the semester was about to begin and no one knew anything with respect to the same. The secretary's answer to all of the inquiry was that the issue was being studied . . . And that he expected that the legislature would approve the omission of another of bond to that effect—more loans—to which I argued, is that such a loan we could not continue to pay along with the already high taxes, sales taxes, and government waste. He did not

believe very happily because the group was very insistent with its questions and bothered by his answers. It was very revealing for me to experience the autonomy and assertiveness of the teachers from schools that are facing such a serious crisis and affected by the stipulations of the NCLB. The teachers were not docile, but were very respectful and politically clear.

Conclusions: Praxis of Knowledge Reinvention Is to Reinvent the Future

Street pedagogy stands for the emerging power that people have forged from their social political endeavors. I want to be optimistic about people, especially when it is about individuals that have had to live and learn their lessons in the face of many disadvantages. Understanding the world's sensibility does not take place outside of our practice. That is the lived practice for the practice upon which we reflect is that which also represents our reality. It implies a dynamic comprehension between the least coherent sensibility of the world and a more coherent understanding of the world. By being located where they can see and live oppression closely, the same people are not drowned in the ideological conditioning of unawareness, and so are compelled to act. The cultural capital that marginalize groups have acquired in their struggles is clear evidence as authors, architects, and composers of their own history through processes that reinvent their world. First, it is impossible to think of overcoming oppression, passivity, or pure rebellion without first acquiring a critical comprehension of history in which these intercultural relations take place in a dialectical form. Thus, they are both contradictory and a part of the historical process. In Latin America, especially Puerto Rico, where we have "democratic inexperience," under an umbrella of economic, social, political, and cultural colonialism, education is less reflective, more repetitive, naïve, and supportive of the "culture of silence." Oppressors and oppressed are mutually kept busy and entertained by matchers far removed from our contexts and its needs. While this may seem very discouraging to some, it becomes fertile ground for radical dialogues in an education of possibility born of street pedagogy.

Second, we cannot think of overcoming oppression without political pedagogical projects that point to the transformation of the reinvention of the world. Our narrative is one of constant struggle, which expands from the memories of pieces of history that creates the context and space to be expressed. You could see four women engaging in a dialogue, voices from different locations creating an understanding of the past days' situation. In disputing the many obstacles within the system, the bureaucracy and countless repeated prejudices in our lives, there is a hoping person who is not waiting for hope to arrive but who reinvents all as possibility through a transformation of social and material conditions; as the owner of the beauty salon expressed: "I must give her an opportunity, she is starting and needs a head start in order to establish a name for herself," and "by educating others." In this way she becomes a teacher, a human mediator, as Vygotsky would say, a person who decides to give direction to education because the mediator is also a subject with a position

and not a neutral voice. In this complex society, we sometimes find ourselves living submerged in time, without a critical and dynamic dialectical appreciation of history, as a history simply passes over our heads without realizing that we are, in fact, its actors and authors. This fatalism, as Freire and Vygotsky stressed, immobilizes, suffocates, and kills us. History is nothing without our participation; it has no power, but the power that we invest in it. History as Marx said does not command us, but makes us while we make it. This statement should encourage us to think about how we reinvent and re-create history instead of repeating it; it's a call for the reclaiming of history as a critical response to human possibility.

On the other hand, the ideologies of power, whether they discriminate or are resisted, embody themselves in special forms of social and or individual behavior that vary from context to context. Recalling Freire's statements in *Pedagogy of Hope*, education is an ontological neat and so it needs to fix firmly on practice in order to become a concrete history. That is why, there is no hope in the waiting, and such would make it futile. Without a minimum of hope we cannot even begin to struggle. As an ontological need, it gets twisted becoming hopelessness. As humans we must educate our hope. Streets, communities, empowered collectives make possible our faith in people, people who dare to love, who dare to be human, assuming themselves with fears and yet with the hopes of being more and better political beans or beings. Daring to be is not a "romantic nor idealistic" option. It is an attitude of strength, born of faith; it is a political art. To reclaim social justice, that seems appropriately a central goal of education, we must dare to proclaim and celebrate street pedagogy. Vygotsky's voice also spoke about the crucial role of context and the social, cultural, political, and economic forces that affect cognitive development and potential.

I remember now as then, 12 years after my experiences in Jamaica Plain and the birth of street pedagogy, the significance of those developments and their relationship to an experience I lived very personally at the time in Puerto Rico. My friend and colleague José Solís Jordán had been arrested by the FBI and charged with conspiring against the U.S. government. [Chapter 9](#) of this book presents the experiences of his arrest, trial, conviction, and the pedagogical movements that this struggle generated in a colonial community of people engendered with hope and what Freire called radical love. The following passage by Paulo Freire is a testimony of how education can reveal its power in poetic form, leaving a text that is constantly written by the people whose stories I've portrayed.

We must dare, in the full sense of the word, to speak of love without the fear of being called ridicules, monkish, or unscientific, if not, antiscientific. We must dare in order to say scientifically, and not as mere blah, blah, blah, that we study, we learn, we teach, we know with our entire body. We do all of these things with feelings, with emotion, with wishes, with fear, with doubts, with passion, and also with critical reasoning. However, we never study, learn, teach, or know with the last only. We must dare so as never to dichotomize cognition and emotion. We must dare so that we can continue to teach for a long time under conditions that we know well: low salaries, lack of respect, and the ever present risk of becoming prey to cynicism. We must dare to learn how to dare in order to say no to the

bureaucratization of the mind to which we are exposed every day. We must dare so that we can continue to do so even when it is so much more materially advantageous to stop daring. (1998, p. xviii)

After analyzing and discussing the discursive activities of people who hope, of average people, I want to close these pages reaffirming the pertinence of Freire and Vygotsky's thoughts in terms of a variety of educational scenarios that can convey possibilities: universities, schools, communities, neighborhoods, the jail, and streets. Freire and Vygotsky's theories, lives, struggles, and aspirations provide a solid half for an explanation of the value of street pedagogy and its powerful influence on critical psychology and critical pedagogy. As emotional and thinking beings, humans are able to understand their social, spiritual, and political contexts in ways that make possible change, reinvention, and the transformation of the conditions of their lives. As once M. Gandhi, and then M. L. King and N. Mandela, educated generations using the *satyagraha*⁹ (means literally the "weapon of truth" or the "spiritual strength," in Spanish "arma de la verdad") or civil nonviolent disobedience to resist becoming the mirror of violence, street pedagogy reminds me that we educate ourselves always together as cultural, spiritual, political, and historical beings.

Notes

1. His original work was *Das Kapital: Kritik der politischen Oekonomie*, written in 1867.
2. I heard this expression from a Puerto Rican colleague, Wanda Rodríguez Arocho, to whom I am very grateful and solidararian.
3. From the psychology of drama to the drama of psychology: The relationship between the *life* and *work* of Lev S. Vygotsky, 2007.
4. In Joe Kincheloe (2004). *Critical pedagogy primer*. Peter Lang.
5. Spinoza's philosophy has much in common with *Stoicism* in as much as both philosophies sought to fulfill a therapeutic role by instructing people how to attain *happiness*. However, Spinoza differed sharply from the Stoics in one important respect: he utterly rejected their contention that *reason* could defeat emotion. On the contrary, he contended, an emotion can only be displaced or overcome by a stronger emotion. For him, the crucial distinction was between active and passive emotions, the former being those that are rationally understood and the other aren't. He also held that knowledge of true causes of passive emotion can transform it to an active emotion.
6. Vygotsky (1916/1970/2007, 1925/1970/2007).
7. Vieques is located at 6 miles southeast of Puerto Rico. The U.S. Marine (Department of Defense) took 24,762 acres of land for training purposes, while 9,000 Viequenses had nearly 6,627 acres in the center of the island. Vieques island has a total of 32,930 acres. Ortiz Marcial brings much more details in his book, *En la playa con Rubén* (2001).
8. This statement was kindly translated by Jaime's cell mate, Senator Manuel Rodríguez Orellana, who took Rubén Berríos' place in Senate—minority chair—after he was arrested. Three months later Manuel Rodríguez Orellana, Jaime Negrón, Rev. Luis Acevedo, and Speaker Víctor García San Inocencio entered Vieques on August 2000 and were arrested and jailed.
9. Term in Spanish by Toro and Cabassa (2004) in their book *Me llamo Gandhi*. The translation of "spiritual strength" is mine, inspired on Anaida Pascual-Morán's Spanish translation for the term in *Fuerza de espíritu, fuerza de paz* (2003), ISBN 1-881720-88-8.

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Chapter 3

Pedagogy as Critical Artscience: A Proposal, a Breakthrough

*Art is like oxygen to science... science is like earth to art.
Education needs both.*

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Artscience and Pedagogy

Education is a reciprocal activity to convey with “others” and accompany them to construct knowledge. An educator, a teacher, must deal with complex schooling contexts which require a more energetic brain and bodily activity. Therefore, critical and progressive pedagogy must integrate artistic and scientific thinking. Many research teachers I know share an understanding about the coherence of the arts and sciences to think in “new” ways that bring a broad approach in teaching. To dialogue with these teachers brings a great deal of hope and inspiration because they have a powerful germ that moves them to a more fascinating and appealing teaching. In 2005, while writing a presentation for graduate students about teaching and assessment, I decided to title it *To teach is to do “science@rt”* (*cienciarte* in Spanish). If you

pronounce it *science-H-art* it sounds as if your feelings and emotions are inextricably involved. Actually, I was about to present my work in a full-day workshop to graduate students who were teaching and research assistants in all disciplines in the university campus.¹ It was a big responsibility for me as speaker and educator, and to fulfill this I immediately came up with the proposal: teaching is an art and a science. Science-*h*-art is just a semantic “convenient invention” which plays an interesting role in pedagogy in (e)motion. I thought on this concept and developed some assumptions to explain the fusion and to describe how they are inscribed in education.

The concept “artsience” (words inverted) is not my invention. I did invent science-*h*-art, which in Spanish reads better. “Artsience is a participatory practice to formulate concepts and questions with planetary consciousness. Artists, scientists, spiritualists, and world opinion leaders have recognized the phenomenon of planetary consciousness from their diverse approaches” as expressed by Rivera (2003, p. 578). Fortunately, it has been a transdisciplinary movement comprised by artists and scientists from prestigious universities² which poses that the existing cultural split between the artistic and scientific fields is a severe handicap to the progress of humankind. Since the midst of the twentieth century, a timely movement called artsience has been growing to eradicate the artificial frontiers between both the realms. Taking this fusion of art and science to describe the task of teaching, I propose that this crossover learning enhances the capacity to be smart and creative by being cognitively elastic and resilient. It provides a significant medium to innovation that sparks the passion, curiosity, and freedom to pursue challenging ideas (Edwards, 2008). Based on this pluralistic approach, I delve into the affirmation that education brings the most important contexts for society, contexts that are interwoven in all cultures through their teachers, for the nascent field of the practice of scienceart with which they are no longer only duplicators of contents, but artisans of an inquisitive and liberating pedagogy.

Through the intention to connect both cultural products and processes, such as art and science, and use the fusion to describe the processes and practices in education, I am suggesting that educators can produce science knowledge as well as art knowledge. A well-equipped educator in favorable conditions for action research can produce knowledge in many directions. Robert Marzano and John Brown (2009) wrote the *Handbook for the Art and Science of teaching* based on the book written in 2007. It is a good resource for teachers in any subject matter full of very well-known educational strategies that have been named “effective and proven” in education. However, I go further to propose that much more than call teaching a science because of empirical data from educational research, it is the sense of acknowledgment of the complexity of the human learning and its socially diverse contexts that provide the framework to make a breakthrough in traditional thinking. Many dedicated educators create, explore, and validate products and devices invented and designed to advance the reinvention and adjust to their ideas and educational assumptions. But little is the value and prominence given to those products, the power is not given to the master who succeeded with its “methods” because they were not empirically validated. In fact, at the end of the road, it is the large

and standardized tests that “measure” success of schools and teachers. This creates a great deal of controversy, frustration, and lack of credibility in the public opinion.

I also believe that the “technology or external product,” which is not apolitical and does have its genesis in the cultural action called as teaching, transforms the practices and social codes that made it possible. However, that technique has to be contextualized and placed in the appropriate scene. Even when the technique is the product of thinking elevated to high levels of creativity and systematization, its place in society will depend on the forces that have decisional clout. What we invent transforms us, but will it move us from the sociopolitical context? Or will it depend on the power structures? Teacher preparation programs are many times criticized for oversimplifying the use of techniques and practices only to model them, reuse them, use others models, copying them, and perpetuating the noncreation, not research and the nongeneration of local and self-knowledge. Therefore, the proposal of pedagogy as critical artsience forces us to rescue the power of creation and scientific research for teachers.

The first decade of the twenty-first century has shown that straightforward facts are not useful to explain complexity in pedagogical, schooling, and learning situations. We have seen how educational reforms in the United States and Puerto Rico have failed because, in the name of scientifically based truth, class, race, and economic gaps have increased and worsened the panorama of schooling and the country’s hopes for equity and justice. This historical fact requires assuming a critical posture for the fusion of art-science, since both have inherited meanings that we need to problematize. But, of course, more is needed than the technique; after it comes the interpretation of its advances and the use of results. Some contemporary philosophers and educators propose that it is appropriate to talk about the science and technology of cognition (Varela, 1999). Part of the analysis leans toward highlighting the fact that the tools that we use give the essential form to all of human activity, including the processes through which we construct our understandings of the reality we live. Rodríguez Arocho (2002) explains that we must consider the explanation of human development and evolution in the invention and use of tools as a qualitative leap that gave way to the more purposeful and directed human behavior. This leap is marked by the use of tools and with them the signs and their system of meanings that begin to mediate the interaction of the organism and its environment. That is why I say that the creation of tools is the means to advance our relation with the physical nature and address social needs (Pozo, 2003). Not tools by themselves, but through their use with others and for others, their modifications, their effect on the physical and social environment change us and necessarily become prosthesis and extensions of applied and philosophical knowledge. Psychologist Juan Pozo discusses that the intelligence that is needed to survive socially is of a different level from what is needed to face the material world. In other words, it is more challenging to face the demands of the social world than those of the physical world, which is what made humans evolve in the different time periods.

Because of this, as an eminently social undertaking, education is a complex scenario that requires the practice of artsience, not only because it uses the methods of both, but because it requires the transformation of those products to be able to teach

in a critical sense and as a pressing agenda. My proposal is to describe a pedagogy which underscores both scientific and artistic thinking in its practices and ideals. Some of my assumptions are:

- Much more than good objectives are needed for good pedagogy. In the same way that an artist and a scientist require good tools to think of the world, the educator needs them, creates them, and also questions them.
- The sciences and arts are needed in full fusion. This fusion is more significant for educational undertaking when we conceive emotions as the motor of cognition and therefore, we fuse both as pedagogy in (e)motion.
- The process of teaching and learning are cultural products in nature, with scientific and artistic artifacts that contribute to the development of teaching education from grassroots.
- I propose a definition for artsience: it means that scientific and artistic work embrace each other and become intertwined in education, because of the inquisitive and systematic nature of art and science, which at the same time must be creative and daring. Teachers are fundamental mentors in critical *science-h-art and artsience*.

Teaching and Technique

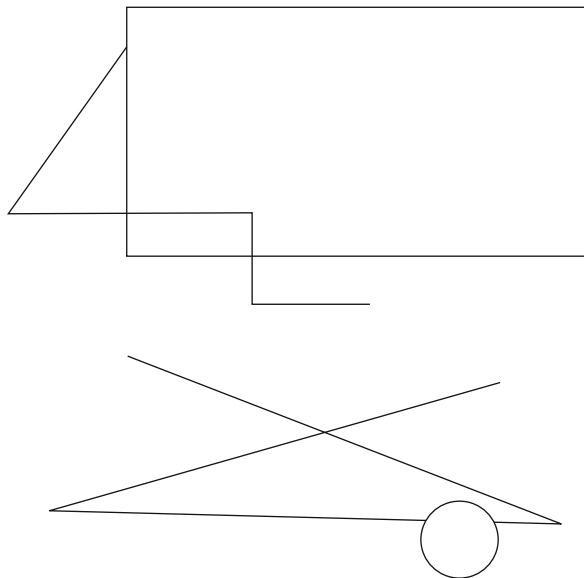
... Although a progressive educator, I must not reduce my instructional practice to the sole teaching of teaching of technique or content, leaving untouched the exercise of a critical understanding of reality.

Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Heart*, 2004, p. 44

The technique that is born of ingenuity, art, and the systematic and scientific exploration is also the daughter of cultural action and leaves its evolutionary footprint when the motor that moves it is cultural heritage. When we talk about the act of teaching we are committed to the physics of movement in music education, which reminds me the interplay between the arch and the cords in the violin. When moved together they make possible an equation; without movement there is no sound. The emotion and passion that the musician gives to the movement can be measured by the length of the stroke. If we use more than one sense and the passion of the interpretation, we will have a sound that speaks to us. The sound touches the soul and that would be the metaphorical expression that also has an equally imagined and invented expression that stems from assumptions, as the scientific ones. Working the details of the student's interpretation very intently and with passion, giving back the space to elevate their interpretation and product to more aesthetic levels requires artsience. To teach with passion a sense of aesthetic patience and dedication are needed. The music teacher also pronounces to his student a simple physics' postulate: The wider the bow is moved through the strings, the more profound and dramatic will be the sound. This approach uses a science's tool—theory and assumption—to teach the art of interpretation. The music teacher is a mediator

of the zone of proximal development, where the technical and aesthetic languages meet each other. Let us remember that the concept of passion is also known as an action of suffering from. . . we are suffering from passion, from a very intense feeling that overtakes us and this is why teaching passionately involves us in an affective plane that moves cognition. Chilean scientist Francisco Varela (1999) says in *Ethical Know-How: Action, Wisdom, and Cognition* that “an action is fully virtuous only if it flows from an activated disposition. An action may be right but cannot be fully virtuous if it is not properly motivated” (p. 29). From physics to mathematical frequencies to artistic performance are the interconnected paths in any human enterprise.

When I read *The book of Emotions (El libro de las Emociones)* by Laura Esquivel, 2000 I could find myself with my group dynamics and games that make you interpret what you do, and hence understand better the relation between science and art. The game of Artists of the word (*dibujantes de la palabra*), that I have changed over time, is an inquisitive, cognitive, and affective that involves participants in interpreting meaning systems that communicate among each other to make a product. A person describes an image to another, which can not be seen, and the verbalizations mediate a whole avalanche of meanings, some shared and others not. The art of teaching is not merely a recited technique; although it is an important tool, the technique will be shared to the extent that there is greater congruence—dance—between both meaning systems. When we harmonize the mixture of the forms, the knowings, and the expressive language of the circles, squares, triangles, and lines with the paper and pencil, we discover that thinking is a shared cultural, political, and risky activity. This is one of the drawings that I use in the activity with my university students.



Drawing 1

Upon completing the activity of dictating the drawing—seated back to back—I discuss the experience and the products with participants. These products are not an isolated result of a laboratory but a process that encloses the many conducts and attitudes of teaching. Both, the one who described and one who drew, were protagonists of the experience. So the artist and the scientist are responsible and part of what they study, explore, or create. In the mediation of multiple meanings, from how to name the figures to the metaphors we use to represent them, there is a great political and cultural change, there is power and risk. The teacher does not know how the student draws his/her words and meanings and the surprises are many as the exercise ends. Then we can say that the technique only covered by passion and the “relation”—the wish to connect—increases the success of the work, of the product. In cases in which the drawings were more consistent with the “original” you could almost “see” the “organization in the brain” of the “other”; this means that we could figure out with precision the route taken by the “teacher.” It is the equivalent of the zone of proximal development of the psychologist Lev Vygotsky, which is why the zone is a space that has to be created recognizing a pedagogy that moves, an emotive pedagogy. Both the language, organized in a system of meanings, as well as the caring of the speaker, make the context for the success of the activity. The exercise brought us closer to another point: the fact that education is a matter of relations. Those students, who were less caring, sensitive and understanding, were not good communicators. The drawings of the “blind” drawers evidenced a surprising variety of organization of the geometrical figures, no one made a same copy of the spoken drawing. Many did not even look like the original drawing, but neither did they look like what was described. The role of the agent of signs also, even those harmless figures, did not want to “scare” anyone; many of the students were anxious, expecting there was something to prove and it had to be done right. Of course, I do this activity with the full intention of creating tension-distension, expectations, surprise, and fun so that we all can relate to our *cogni-emotions*. My intention was not naïve and the problematization that is achieved activates creativity, risk, inference, and scientific thinking. What a lot of sensory mediations, symbolic, semiotic, and emotional came up in that classroom! How complex and fascinating is learning and educating! This quote brings us closer to the task of a teacher who practices artsience:

It would be possible to describe everything scientifically, but it would not have any sense; it would lack meaning if you described Beethoven's symphony as a variation of the pressure of a sound wave.

A. Einstein

Vygotsky, Emotions, and the Critical Artscience

The emotio-intellectual development is understood from the connection between mind-psyche-soul and the human activity in society. As a theoretician, scientist, and artist, Vygotsky let himself be moved by artsience. As if it were a compass—a cultural tool—what is human constitutes the encounter between ontogenesis of

the individual and the phylogenesis represented by the cultural community. What we as human have identified as art and science is a product and process of the compass represented by cultural experience. Since the human being relates to the world through symbols, signs, and social instruments, mediated experience is what provokes psychological development. What we call thinking is a product and process of the interchange and self-regulated interaction of the sociohistorical means. Language is resonant, it is like music, and that resonance allows us to understand and capture inflections, silences, and musicality as we listen to the “other” resonance. Language then is a tool that we use culturally and responds to a cultural DNA, the cultural genome of education.

The heritage of Vygotsky’s thought, associated with the relevance of emotions, the union of the cognitive and the affective, and the development of the representation of a mind supported by a cultural-historical heritage, has not been well developed in the studies of his work (González Rey, 2009). I understand the education, like scienceart, has a very important link to the Vygotskian legacy. This legacy allows us to understand the scienceart of education as a historical-cultural practice, so subjective, so tentative, and so systematic that it requires a cogni-affective (feeling-thinking) understanding. Quoting Vygotsky from González Rey (2009), we read and understand even more the deep level of the commitment of the Vygotskian thesis with the consideration of emotions as an explanation of thought:

Among the most basic defects of the traditional approximations to the study of psychology is the separation of the intellect from the volitional affective aspects of consciousness. “. . .” Thought itself has become the thinker of thoughts. Thought was divorced from the whole vitality of life, from the intentions, the interests and the inclinations of thought (p. 3).³

In education—comprising the aspects of implementation or teaching as well the aspiration and goal or utopia—it is necessary to emphasize the differentiated character of the learner in the educational process and the process itself. To propitiate a critical education, evolving talents in a dialectical fashion, teachers must resist the fossilization of the disciplines’ content. It is not trying to freeze the suppositions that historically will crumble for lack of pertinence. Now, a progressive way out is to understand learning in an active and creative way, where contradiction befriends diversity and difference. That is how we understand the complexity and contextualization of what is implied in scienceart. By the hand of this conceptualization is the understanding that learning is risk, adventure, exploration, and an unending personal experiment. Because of this, the learner is moved by the motor of emotions that are their life insurance for solving problems in the broad sense.

Artscience helps us to look at teaching as quantitatively tentative and subject to improvement, as human and fallible, imperfect and questionable, verifiable through research and therefore changing as goal and origin. The quantifiable quality of any results regarding how, what, or where we can know more or improve teaching must inform the qualitative “quality” of its goals, and vice versa. Artscience is a necessary bonding to reunite research and creation. The teacher, as a trained professional in teaching and curriculum, pushes development because he/she changes the learner through a stimulating and relational activity. The psychological development of

human beings is the result of the crossover between two histories: biological evolution and cultural construction (Arias Beatón, 2005). Therefore, all development is a generative process that transcends the activity that stimulated it. From such marriage, the concept of what we call human is born, as well as human talents and creations, such as art and science.

Paradigmatic Explosions: Precedent of the Creative Process

Play your violin with your heart. . .!!!

Music teacher Marta Hernández Candelas

Philosophers, scientists, and historians of science point out that sometimes abrupt changes take place in the evolution of science and, in general, of knowledge. These changes represent a departure in the process of scientific research and in the idea of science itself. In this way, a new scientific theory may go dramatically beyond the limits of a preceding one, to situate itself in a new epistemological context, and not even compatible with the prior one. In a similar way, McLaren (1995) and Kincheloe (2004a) reject the idea of the absolute frontier, not because they esteem that science lacks boundaries, but because they consider that tracing a frontier is the same as trespassing it. The frontier represents a departure, but one that is destined to disappear. There will always be an evolutionary element; in this sense it must be recognized that scientific and artistic productions have elements of continuity, although the knowledge generated through this process transgresses previous conceptions. Science works with the development of assumptions in order to drive research and inquiry, and also shapes, through methodologies, the ways of gathering data to be interpreted. Teachers deal with many techniques and strategies which have to be tested and interrogated constantly. “Educational experience, no less than theoretical research, teaches us that, in practice, a straightforward learning of concepts always poses impossible and educationally fruitless” (Vygotsky, 1994, p. 356). This, says Rodríguez-Matos (2006), is a function that cannot be delayed: to invade spaces of knowledge sustained by created knowledge and to fuse both in pedagogical practice and the related fields.

To write this section of essay I decided to have a guided conversation with colleague Dr. Andrés Batista⁴ toward the end of 2008, and I obtained several coordinates for the analysis of intellectual production of teachers that is related to the arts, with mathematical and physical concepts and the thoughts that are privileged in the educational contexts.

AB: I am writing about the fusion of arts and sciences because for the last five or six years I have been offering workshops to students and professors about teaching strategies and techniques, as one prepares the presentation and thinks about how to convey the message about what one does, how is that working to me and I have realized that one becomes involved in tasks that are scientific, because one works

thinking about a methods, thinking about planning, thinking about the hypotheses that one makes about work and how this is going to work.

NZ: The calculated risks one takes and how they are played out, to later see the product and document it, is what is classically called scientific and systematic method in order to be reteachable and remade, but at the same time there is a lot of art here. Then art is like an expression that is creative and can be innovative, a reinvention of something that already exists. After having read your work *The technological thought in ideographic structures*,⁵ I think not only in giving movement to ideas, but also in relating with the movement of ideas, because there is a personal and affective relation between yourself and the things you do, and the tools you decide to use.

AB: Master Paul Cezanne established that the mark or point of departure is the relation of the artist with the object and with the study of it. Use the line as an example. We have to love and relate with the line while working with it. What is beyond the vertical line? Can you see beyond, there are other things behind the vertical line? The argumentation I have while I am working on a piece. Antonio Nadia, Puerto Rican master, was who inspired me with the affection for the simple.—or what it looks simple—and Nadia made us look at a line in a way. . . he made a line, with a pencil, and made us look at it through a magnifier to see all the things that were on the surface of that line. Then we entered the plane of the line graphically traced and on the support, which can be the paper, the plane, and wherever you see the line. I think in all this and think in artsience. It brings us to the point of the affect of the relation between humans and the object. I abandon the word object and go more toward symbols. Humans and our relation with the symbol, that affective relation I understand that opens like a door. Let's say that it is the door towards many things, towards new discoveries.

NZ: It's because doing science or art is assuming the given mechanics and how to change, apply, explain or appreciate them, even re-invent them, never destroying it.

AB: Yes. . . we are dependent on rotational mechanics. . .speaking in terms of technological thinking, it's like thinking that all things have to spin round. We should ask, why does it have to be that way? With that philosophical argument you can bring an object to the classroom and make students think about how we could change the rotation so it's not from a specific point. How does the insect do it? Then we could bring, maybe, pictures of the insect to the classroom, project simulators from a computer or in the school yard. Let's think about this, how would you see it? What would you change? I am bringing them closer to that experience because it can be far away—of art and science—in these times children are not very connected with nature. I always remember a historic phrase of Madame Curie; she said, "Mystery is not to be feared, but to be understood." And that should be the goal of education.

NZ: Scientific thought becomes a research question or questions; the artistic thought transformed into design is not distant of the first. The approach is very important because there is an appreciation and this is enriching for teachers, because it is the foundation to elevate our practice.

Artscience Is Not Neutral

Neither science nor art, as disciplines and subject matters, is neutral; both have a history of inherited meanings. As soon as they are part of our repertoire of cultural productions, they also inherit ideologies; and so is teacher education. According to Kincheloe (2004b), Oakes and Lipton (1999), teacher education provides little insight to understand the forces that shape and work in the construction of identities and consciousness. To be a radical and critical educator it is necessary to go through an intentioned personal transformation—we have to break away from the fanatics of “technical rationality.”⁶ In order to achieve a critical artsience practice in education, teachers in all contexts must understand the “subtle interaction with the empirical, normative, critical, ontological and reflective-synthetic knowledge” (Kincheloe, 2004b).

De Jesús (2005), a Puerto Rican artist and professor of educational technology, art and science, has a great capacity for observation and analysis as well as an acute intuition and creativity to transcend the ordinary plastic or scientific problem. Interestingly, he sees education as a technology or an extension of human creativity. For me, however, education is the opportunity to be both, artsience in a critical and political sense, as it supposes that everything we do in the relational, physical, and social plane is above all a political act, positioned in an ideology or system of ideas harbored in suppositions of how and for what do we do science and art. It would be absurd, or rather naïve, to deny that this is so.

The concept of artsience for me includes both basic qualities of the educational endeavor: science that presupposes an attitude and inquisitive posture for that knowledge that has been historically accumulated, proved and revalidated, in the field of education and psychology. On the other hand, the quality of art created and imagined artifice by the educator that invents and reinvents the ways through which we transmit information in a unique and unrepeatably way. In his book, *Pedagogy of the Heart*, Freire (2004, p. 33) talks about the concept of life-support or sustainability which becomes reachable only to “the degree that there is an increasing solidarity between the mind and the hands.” In Paulo Freire’s reasoning, rationality is rationally clamoring for the right to its emotional roots. I felt touched by Jane Goodall’s position as a scientist by reading the responses the primatologist gave to questions of the public. She was asked about her attachment and empathy to animals and how this interferes with her subject of study.

... although a scientist is supposed to be objective and lack empathy, I’ve always thought this is wrong, It’s the empathy you feel with a living, individual being that really helps you understand. Then you can use your scientific training to find out if your intuition is correct. (TIME, 2009, p. 8).

Speaking about her legacy, we must transcend the frontier of disciplines, as she did. She approached through anthropology, behavior and environmental education, scientific research, and human rights education. Listening to her lecture in November 2009 at the UPR and connecting many of the topics of her interest, I

reaffirm how far we are from understanding our nature because we insist in separating knowledge with theoretical walls. This primatologist answers the key question of the connection between subject and object that the socially responsible scientist makes and at the same time political. For Paulo Freire this kind of rupture emerges from the need to rethink and reinvent, a challenging attitude and anti-immobilization in the face of formal and canonical statutes of society.

A researcher for whom what is studied is part of oneself makes him/her responsible with the reasons for studying and wanting to understand. In fact, to be truly efficient one has to understand that we and our actions are part of that order. Pedagogy, as critical artsience, recognizes the hermeneutical value of the emotional dimension of thinking and performance and the intentional fusion of science and arts. We are not in isolation in the world; we all come from a cultural context, and as educators—scientists and artists—we are part of the nature that we study and recreate. Let's take the example of the ability to improvise in medical diagnosis. Dr. Rick Hodes,⁷ a native of Long Island, New York, a specialist in cancer, heart disease, and spinal conditions, keeps a clinic in Ethiopia, which thanks to the art of improvisation could supply alternative forms of what many hospitals have. It lacks the luminous screen to examine x-rays, but examines them against sunlight. His colleagues say that he is very sharp in his diagnosis and that he does it with a stethoscope, his brain, and his heart (Miller, 2009, p. 111). He is dedicated in heart and soul to curing and offering services to needy children and youth, including his five adopted children. Could this doctor renounce to his art which allows him to work brilliantly as a health scientist? One of the characteristic of a good theoretical paradigm to understand such response to limited situations is the one which conceives reality from the location of complexity. Even the simplest event of life has a tentative explanation—which can be the official explanation, the accepted, the paradigms, or the counterproposal. The thing is that we have not reached as much as alternative explanations as we can produce because we have been very comfortable with the mainstream. Can we survive without envisioning antimainstream solutions?

Two Cultures or Two Cultural Languages

“While science aims at expressing reality subjectivity, through the artistic creativity of the artist, science aims at expressing reality objectivity, through the empirical investigations of the scientist” (Makedon, 1990, p. 7). Science and art have particular languages that do not mean necessarily a barrier for an understanding and collaboration, although can be used to “invalid” one to another. Since languages are the soul of cultures, this may present a challenge, more than obstacle, to achieve common understandings. On the contrary, particular *languages* or dialects today have fed both scientific and art thinking, and the interpretations of those languages have moved our development and creativity as humanity with inventions, tools, and other expressive and nonexpressive languages. In addition, by sharing processes such as systematic observation, inferences, measuring, calculating, reflecting upon past mistakes or accomplishments, evaluating, judging, and looking for patterns or

discrepancies, among others, we can open the possibilities for teachers today to transgress the cult of *inbreeding*. Nevertheless, science and art can be very distant one to another and there in the academic world. Crossing conventional lines that divide arts and sciences is what Edwards (2008) has called the *artscience zone*.

The evidence of the integration in human trajectory in the world is the richness of the arts and sciences trajectories and their footprints in us. A very exemplary illustration is a natural history museum, where subject matters reunite and inform each other. We are moving toward complementarity because we've decided to transform the nature and changes we transmit in history. We relate to the world in the use of signs and social instruments—cultural artifacts, tools, and this mediatization are causing the development of capacities to learn and this act ends in moving and leading the development. Through sign systems that we create—art and science as a labor and value systems—not only transform the world, but transform themselves. For this reason, the paradigm of complexity refers to all a discursive field that has been occurring within the own hard sciences (from the twentieth century) and which has been placing science against the same science. Changes in evolution of science are strong because the big cogni-emotive reactions, in general, are breakthroughs of centenary ideas. These changes represent struggles against cannon and the idea of conceiving scientific, educational, or art research. This opens the way to alternate ways of thinking about social processes as a whole. This way allows artists and scientists to interrogate their purposes and goals. The principle that states that reality has its own objective dimension, independently from our feelings and opinions, no longer holds. But the more we get into the deepening of knowledge construction the more we assert that facts and inferences are sides of the same coin. Even numbers and statistics inform about a reality which can have different data interpretation, and yet be part of the same event. In education, every committed teacher has the multititanic roles to be inquisitive as scientific, looking for questions and answers; skillful and creative as an artist, and yet reflect toward her own convictions and believes...every day.

Edwards (2008) says that scientists are famous for believing in the proven and peer-accepted, they recognize correct and incorrect where artists see only true and false. He proposes crossing conventional lines or mental borders achieve breakthroughs in the arts and sciences by developing their ideas in an intermediate *zone* of human creativity where neither art nor science is easily defined, or do not need “to be defined.” Complexity here is a call for a post-formal and critical paradigm which is not new in critical pedagogy and science but may now be as necessary and politically correct as collaborative networks to sustainable living is. This emergent paradigm is developing in the world because it is posing new questions about issues of artscience as a practice.

Some say that teaching is a science. These people usually stress the scientific traditionalist aspects of teaching and focus on ways to systematize the communication between teacher and student. “It implies tha good teaching will some day be attainable by closely following rigorous laws that yield control and high predictability” (Gage, 1979, p. 17). They believe that it is possible, through careful selection and pacing of materials, to regulate interactions among the student, the teacher, and

materials to be learned, thus reducing the possibility that learning occurs by chance. They believe that enough is now known about how people learn to develop a technology of teaching. One of the chief advocates of a technology of teaching was B. F. Skinner. He argued that teachers can be trained to employ educational technology or to use “fool-proof” materials that do the teaching. Thousands of teachers in every part of the world can prove that this is pedagogically wrong.

To transcend the antinatural division among human productions, I choose a proposal of Maturana and Varela (1992), both biologists, about ethics:

Every human act takes place in language. Every act in language brings forth a world created *with others in the act of coexistence* [my emphasis] which gives rise to what is human. Thus every human act has an ethical meaning because it is an act of constitution of the human world. This linkage of human to human is, in the final analysis, the groundwork of all ethics as a reflection on the legitimacy of the presence of others. (p. 247).

An Art, A Science: Teaching Is Both—in a Critical and Sensible Way

In reality, education requires technical, scientific, and professional development as much as it does dreams and utopia.

Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Heart*, p. 43.

A former student wants to bring a social and ethical disposition to science teaching; she wants to present science as a way of observing life:

While a student at the Faculty of natural sciences—more than ten years ago—I wanted to complete a sub-especialización in education. I always liked teaching, provide mentoring and inventing activities. I took several courses at the Faculty of education, including growth and human development and I loved it because it was an opportunity to see me as part of what he wanted to study. Now I am a student graduated in chemistry and I received a scholarship to work with teachers of science at the intermediate level. My interests and priorities have changed, but I still like science and education. I have been involved in several projects in schools, communities and youth organizations and I would like to do a PhD in education to be professor of chemistry. The faculty of natural sciences required that pedagogical tool to capture the interest of students and motivate them to see science as a way to observe the life and not as a subject.

Flavia

With Flavia’s approach of teaching science, technique is just one of many means to observe life and world. She places in a very high position the “art” of observing with respect and sensibility, with the senses and feelings. She also brings her history as undergraduate student in sciences, her relation with education courses, her training as graduate student, and her work in schools with science teachers. Many contextual layers have shaped Flavia’s understandings and motives to become a college educator in chemistry. As a disposition, to teach having in mind the art–science connection can be viewed as an attitude, a personal approach to teach (Makedon,

1900). Others say that teaching is an art. These people believe that “scientific” teaching ends up in formalized, cookbook approaches that force students to perform and bureaucratize learning. Besides, they argue, actual teaching involves great amounts of intuition, improvisation, and expressiveness, and effective teaching depends on high levels of creativity, sound judgment, and insight. I do not see a divorce on both visions; I see the need to problematize and make more politic what teaching is for. As stated by Phillips and Carr (2006), Einstein applied systematic *scientific research and imagination* to disprove three centuries’ worth of physics, same ingredients used by early scientists to prove their old theories. Old theories may not explain the physical world as good as early ones which may be attributed to historicity of the social contexts complexity. People’s behavior and values change data and the many ways in which data are interpreted.

The teacher, like the conductor, draws upon a repertoire of skills and orchestrates a highly complex process by helping others to connect through a written musical composition: written for different instruments with different tones and sounds. The conductor has to read and understand all scores: the woods, the metals, percussion without performing the instrument. It is a matter of scaffolding and support with all the musicians, a matter of connectedness and problem solving when changes in movements, tempo, and dynamics may interfere. The metaphor is good, but teachers may not deal with such experienced or competent “musicians” instead with young or inexperienced learners. Teaching involves much more complex judgments that unfold during the course of instruction and demonstration with big restraint: standards and fixed curriculums. Paradoxically, and given the great emphasis on learning results and the vast educational scientifically based research on teaching effectiveness, it is the fault of anyone else but tests, the millions of students are “left behind.”

Teachers must deal creatively with the unexpected, as many laboratory science researchers must deal with uncertainty, too. In his book *The Scientific Basis of the Art of Teaching* (Gage 1979) wrote:

...when scientists are doing research, they are themselves practicing an art.“ . . .” In an experiment in which the charge of an electron was measured to an accuracy of two parts in 10 billion was described as an “experimental work of art”. Here the scientist does use judgment, intuition, and insight in handling the unpredicted- contingencies of the same kind that arise when a panting, a poem, or a pupil is the target of an artistic effort (p. 17).

There are no fail-safe routines and prescriptions. Furthermore, the most important goals of teaching are those events that occur during the process. The outcomes are often embedded in the learning process itself. Once the teacher is committed with the process she will document her findings, may share them with other teachers, and action research takes place. The research in classrooms, conducted by teachers, moves a very important dimension of scienceart: the propulsion of knowledge among educators and the movement of teachers as researchers who take empowerment in their profession.

How is it not possible that teaching may be some art and some science? Teaching involves ethical and social judgments in a creative fashion—depending on the

audience—that depend on science or established research. As Gage notes, there is a “scientific basis for the art of teaching.” This scientific base is found chiefly in the social sciences, in the research on learning generated by the disciplines of psychology, sociology, and speech communication, among others. Naturally, the “knowledge” produced by the social sciences, like that of the physical sciences, is growing and ever-changing, subject to correction and open to new findings. Yet a knowledge base exists, but is there to be understood as well as interrogated by teachers, if they pose themselves as scientists, too.

Perhaps the best way to think about teaching is to call it what it should be called, a cultural job. Teaching involves professional judgment. Teaching calls for the trained eye to see what is actually happening, and the sensible mind to decide what to do next. In fact, the mark of a profession is that its knowledge cannot be reduced to fail-safe rules and universal prescriptions. Scientific knowledge—which is tentative and historically sensitive—and also a keen, intense, and dedicated sense of how to apply it are both required for making well-informed professional decisions about teaching. Even with this picture, we can fail with many students because teaching others also involves the recognition of the context and its complexity. Enthusiastic and intelligent teachers may understand that many uncontrolled variables may mediate for good and for worst. A great briefcase of tools, as the artists and scientists have, will aid, encourage, and support, but a committed spirit and stamina is highly recommended.

Flexible and Elastic Thinking, Not Rigid Thinking

The purpose of music and maybe even the purpose of life is to connect with people and create.

Eric Moe, trumpeter (in Schweitzer, 2009, p. 57)

Flexible and elastic thinking is most useful in education than rigid and hard thinking. In my proposal of education as science art, arts and sciences let you get to good explanations: full of sensations, emotions, memories, and facts. Recently I watched a video of a session at the World Science Festival in 2009⁸: musician Bobby McFerrin demonstrated the power of the pentatonic⁹ scale. He hopped in front of a massive audience while singing a tone on each hop. He made as much hops as if he was on a giant floor piano and the crowd chorus sounded like it was “reading the score.” He said that regardless the place, every audience takes the notes, which he thinks is due to the pentatónica scale. This is not a mystery, pentatonic scale is used in the music composition worldwide which may explain the “familiarity” with all audiences to sing with it. This is an example of how arts/science involved in music composition relates to the historical and cultural genome of the civilization. I was amazed of the video because I was in the middle of this essay in which I wanted to establish the harmony between the science and arts. The pentatonic scale is particularly important in music education in early years: the tones are perfect for improvisation, almost error-free, because it evokes a child’s native tones. From a

neurological view, the five tones in the scale are genetically inherited—biological inheritance—which explains the broad range of possible musical compositions. The creation of the patterns in time and sounds—artsience—represents *la herencia cultural*. Speaking about culture, New York City, where the festival was held, in their school districts, has children who represent 118 countries.

But also tragedies, massacres, and wars are part of our cultural heritage. A quick glance to the history of power relations in the geopolitical scenario can bring up an idea of the power of relations and domination and their role in civilization. If we examine the true development of many colonized countries such as India—which under England was maltreated and condemned to be less—it cannot be measured by the technological development brought by the empire. India's development is better accountable by the political and ethic ruptures that moved its people to claim and make sacrifices to be a sovereign and autonomous country, by using simple but powerful means such as "*satyagraha*" or *power of spirit; strength of truth* (nonviolent response to conflict). This systematic strategy of "*satyagraha*" used by Gandhi inspired Dr. Martin L. King in the United States to move the civil rights struggle to another level: the nonviolent struggle. This ethical posture requires not only high amounts of will and drive, but internal control to succeed. I call it the art of enlightening your spirit, mind, and body in an altruist faith. How can science contribute to the development of countries, assuming science as nonneutral, using its content and processes in a nonviolent relationship with others? Thus, human achievements should be measured by the degree of well-being of humanity, as a collective, instead of claiming achievements of the more privileged, powerful, or wealthy. As Huxley (in Altschuler-Stern, 2008) expressed in his book, *Man's Place in Nature*, the most important and relevant question for humanity is to precise the man's place in nature and his relation with the universe of things, as well as what is the limit of his power over nature and the power of nature over us all. From his reflection we can say that the big concern of humankind must be the delicate balance among human talents and competences and their possibilities in search of a collective well-being.

David Altschuler, a scientist in physics and astronomy at the University of Puerto Rico, has a great concern of the limited understanding about science in the common population which can be more marginalized and manipulated by the media and government, as expressed in his conference *Science, Technology, War and Peace* (2008). As he pointed out, technology has its ideology that pushes people to make decisions; however, science has its own ideology. The problem always remains in ethics and power. Perhaps the limited "scientific literacy" (in Oakes & Lipton, 1999) can be explained by the limited trust average people have in getting involved in the science debate. How teachers—whether science teachers or not—may change such perception? If the history of science is part of its content, as it is a human and social enterprise, and scientific knowledge is not distinct from societal challenges (Oakes & Lipton, 1999), then teachers must hold a scientific attitude and vision toward their profession.

Science and the making of science is as social and political act, as education is, and as art is. Today science education must be concerned not just of the processes of

science, but the content which is related with societal challenges, and the history and political events which have defined it. How does it matter if many more people know about the effects of an atomic bomb if they don't realize that they were part of "it"? *Artscience* teachers—of all subject matters—must infuse societal responsibility and ethics standing upon critical inquiry, justice, weighted judgments, good amount of ingenuity, and resourceful toward obstacles. Scientific thought must be understood as a thinking that can challenge its own; it is bold and audacious, but tentative. Such dimension of science drives us to be prudent and critical on science knowledge. Arts and sciences produce vital functions of society, intimately connected with all the other spheres of social life in its material-historical state (Root-Bernstein, 2007). Artists can create realities—from sculptures, paintings, literature, photography, etc.—that can provoke public debate. As artists, scientists also are artisans. A French term called "bricolage" signifies the use of a variety of research tools and ways of seeing (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004) the world, its colors, its people, and its relations, and maybe this term pictures the best the proposal for *artscience* or *science-h-art*.

Science-*h*-Art: Linked by Emotions and Experiences

... the task of the teacher, who is also a learner, is both joyful and rigorous. It demands seriousness and scientific, physical, emotional and affective preparation. It is a task that requires that those who commit themselves to teaching develop a certain love not only of others but also of the very process implied in teaching.

Paulo Freire
Teachers as Cultural Workers, 1998, p. 3

To know that we know is only possible from a critical paradigm because the essence of what we consider knowledge is an arbitrary construction. The educational practitioner is—at least—aware that many theories and models from the scientific tradition of psychology, sociology, philosophy, and other fields have informed pedagogical thinking and knowledge in many ways. Remember that no theory ever solves the many dilemmas with which they are confronted historically (Kuhn, 1970). Even the best theory cannot bring exclusive explanations to a given problem. Teaching in different school contexts with similar problems forces us to be dialectical in our approach to understand the events. According to Ordóñez Peñalongo (2002) pedagogy is the permanent interdisciplinary systematization of the experience from the educational practice. Systematization takes the form of reinvention and reflection, but such attitudes must also confront the political and economic priorities as defined by power interests.

Much of what is necessary to understand schooling, school life, school contexts, and classroom dynamic are situated in both the micro and the macro system context. And many of the questions are like these:

1. How is knowledge produced and reproduced in schools? How does it happen at the university?
2. Which are the knowledge funds that students get from school . . . from university? What is the connection, how do we understand it?
3. How do teachers and students respond to what is transmitted through the everyday life experiences in schools?
4. What do students and teachers do to prepare their activities in school? Do they investigate. . .do they create; what and why?
5. Which interests do skills developed in schools respond to? Are those skills foundation for critical, creative, scientific, and innovative thinking?
6. Are those interests moving through equity and justice, or do they seem to drive in an opposite direction?
7. How do students—from deprived or wealthy contexts—achieve freedom, equity, and justice?
8. Are schools and universities helping to close the gaps among social classes?

There is no list of techniques that can provide solutions and straightforward answers to these complex questions. However, data gathered from critical complex empirical studies can give tentative but good responses that we can use as educators to design and redesign schooling. Even empirical data are tentative because it depends on social variables, measures of which can change constantly. Scientific knowledge is not equivalent to pedagogical understanding, but I believe both can nurture each other. As Kincheloe (2004b) has stated, “critical complex empirical knowledge does not seek validation by reference universal truths. Rather it remains somewhat elusive, resistant to the trap of stable and consistent meaning” (p. 31). Experiential data, that can be systematically organized, also are valuable to illuminate educators.

Experiential knowledge teachers derive from teaching is an important knowledge production. Teachers who believe in what they do, have pride, but flexible thinking, too. They also carefully plan, do constant study in the field, review their mistakes, and have nonstoppable ideas, key variables in their success. For instance, Víctor Torres, a music teacher and musician in my hometown in Puerto Rico, manages 350 students from 4th to 12th grade in his music program since 17 years. Torres has “his success formula”¹⁰ which combines intuition, parents’ leadership and cooperation, trust in families, music and interpretation challenges to the young musicians, scaffolding for talented students, peer mentoring, routines, and constant rehearsing. He cannot lose perspective of the diverse stages of development he is working with, but instead, he takes advantage of that spectrum. He affirms that he loves what he does; he feels passion for the search of excellence in education. Another example is music teacher Josian Torres, also poet, composer, writer, and editor of a local magazine called *Rumbos Fascinantes*¹¹ (*Fascinating Passages*) in the same town. He comes

from the same student's trajectory and same public schools as Víctor; both were in the same music band as students—performing tuba and clarinet, respectively—and both have formal studies in music and education. Josian conducts children—in elementary level—choruses in flutes, voices, Andinian instruments, accordion, and also poetry. His “formula”—in 27 years—combines trustworthiness with families, constant planning on future projections, leadership and advocacy, scaffolding for talented students, and exposure to different instruments, including voice. Josean Torres affirms that “intelligence and talents must move the world to a coexistence that must overcome violent and selfish behaviors and attitudes” (2009, p. 3).¹² Music education is, for both teachers, a valuable tool to nurture self-esteem and multiple intelligences, not necessarily professional musicians, but kind and critical human beings.

Ricardo Irizarry is an aeronautical engineer who worked for 10 years in the aeronautical industry. He also finished a master's in marketing and more recently moved to the field of teaching. He has been teaching advanced algebra and computer sciences in a high school in New York¹³ for 5 years. Professionally he came from the science and math fields, but engineering is a field of innovations, creative sparkle, and movement, which is highly related with science and art. Irizarry believes that teaching and learning have much to do with content and processes of science and arts.

We [teachers] could say that the “inquiry process” used in teaching methods is science based. Teachers make use of inquiry based questions that could be analogous to hypotheses that need to be tested. Through the “inquiry process” and the use of “data” (prior knowledge) students explore, investigate and are driven to discover. As part of the discovery process, students come up with their own conjectures/conclusions. For the student, the discovery of new knowledge should be as significant as an important scientific finding. By the same token, I believe that there are many tools used in teaching and learning that are used in the artistic process. In their creative process, artists go through stages of study that culminate in a work of art. In teaching there are stages of work—we could say tasks—that culminate in learning. Just as different art mediums explore and convey messages, stories, and ideas we do as well through teaching and learning. Whether teaching and learning or the arts, we are using resources that should inspire and stimulate our intellect.

By the same token, but different school setting, Claudina Díaz, a biology teacher of 25 years of experience, works in a middle and high school specialized in arts in San Juan, Puerto Rico. She participates in workshops doing and reflecting about action research with other teachers and university professors. She has been interrogating her pedagogical practices, while exploring her ideas about how her talented students can learn science concepts and processes. She evaluates her strategy of using complex puzzles—500 pieces and different illustrations—to teach the steps in scientific method with all her groups. She affirms with date that a challenging activity, which requires the use of many senses and multiple ways of approaching it, provides a setting for art students to experience observation, hypothesis, test-re-test, replication, gathering data, organizing data, explanation, and interpretation in a way they use their talents in special coordination, planning, and visualization. She also shares with other teachers that her art students make her more aware of the multiple

ways of approaching science problems in the classroom, moving their classroom discussions toward argumentation and debates.

With these vignettes I have defended the concept pedagogy in (e)motion as perspective that stands for an integrated or *sentipensante (cognisense)* (Galeano's concept, in 2000), and the integration of arts and science tools and processes in the teaching and learning task. Teachers and educators cannot be divorced of their emotions because they are basic for coordination of actions. Emotion systems coordinate learning, by coordinating parallel plasticity through the brain; emotions promote the development (Le Doux, 2002). Feelings, e-motions, and memories are fundamentals for thinking. How come a scientist can even place imagination in such a high category on behalf of knowledge generation? Because rules and assumptions, patterns and logic need an engine, which imagination provides. Imagination may provide meaning to experience and *understanding* to knowledge through the formation of images, concepts, and sensations. Israel Scheffler (1991) in his book *In Praise of Cognitive Emotions* indicated that "emotions serve not merely as a *source* of imaginative patterns; they fulfill also a *selective* function, facilitating choice among these patterns, defining their salient features, focusing attention accordingly" (p. 8).

We have to challenge the popular and academic discourse of deficiency. . . . If you fail to learn, you learn to fail. This poses an enormous moral burden on our learners, pointing to them as if they control their academic process. However, there is no such linear equation. We must break with such a fallacy. Failure and mistake are opportunities to reflect and reinvent ourselves. It is a window for evolution, a door that opens another possibility. Steingberg and Kincheloes's edited book titled *What You Don't Know About Schools* (2006) reminds us about the complexity and also unattended and undertaken necessities of schools, teachers, and communities even in big reform times, national recognition and standards, with so much scientific and empirical knowledge put in wrong perspectives.

The Intertwine of Science-h-Art in Teaching

With a pencil in my hand I can trace flat lines or curve lines. . . in addition it helps me learn about geometry.

Gustavo, age 9, What art means to me

For Olga Charneco, a former art teacher at a Montessori¹⁴ elementary school, to teach kids about lines and shadows is an opportunity to foster development of talents as well as scientific and creative thinking. She takes every opportunity to ask children what does art mean to them. For Angel Díaz, art education promotes in students the learning of concepts and processes of what is called science, as well as they appreciate same processes used in art, which are linked by physics. Nobody can deny the strong relationship of arts and sciences as cultural products, but to state that sensible and critic education is a good sample of both may not be a consensus yet. Artscience of teaching must be interpreted as the tentative, inquisitive, and

systematical search of means, tools, and contexts to research, design, and create meaningful ways of provoking in others to know and think about the world. Elliot Eisner asserts that art makes us aware that even words—in their literal fashion—or numbers can communicate how much we know (in López de Méndez, 2007). How to search and retrieve information to convert it into knowledge; how to reflect, think logically, strategically, and to argument; how to investigate, make up an hypothesis, corroborate, discharge, challenge assumptions, conduct testing, construct tests, assess options, and choose possible actions; how to differentiate from one student to another, seeing the invisible, create and perform, think the unthinkable, ask the unaskable, and share and build personal webs are, or should be, educators’ tasks every day. By the same token Gage stated, “when teaching goes on in face-to-face interaction with students, the opportunity for artistry expands enormously. No one can ever prescribe successfully all the twists and turns to be taken as the lecturer, the discussion leader, or the classroom teacher uses judgement, sudden insight, sensitivity, and agility to promote learning” (1979, p. 15).

Joy Amulya (2004) affirms that ruptures can promote opportunities for learning in a meaningful way. For example, “. . .breakthroughs in action or thinking are helpful in revealing what was learned and what our theory of success looks like. Breakthroughs can also instruct on an emotional level.” (p. 3.04). By identifying the coordinates—why, when, where—we were specially motivated to gain insight into the conditions that permit our creativity and idea to flourish and how to direct our work toward a more cohesive and consistent ways. There, you as educator must reflect again and problematize whether to change direction and propose a sensible, novel, and scientific method to reach another goal. The real defeat is to keep social justice for all learners in the world at the same time we articulate our *artscience* pedagogy. Our world is a complex wattle of social and technical systems that, at the same time, displaces diverse realities. It requires an optimistic disposition and sound know-how to handle uncertainty and doubt. Educators and teachers, artists and scientists of all the corners of the world enforce your power, joy, and “cognisensed” kindness in a critical practice in the *artscience zone*.



Detail of the Mural *The Arts and Sciences* at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus, painted in 1965 by Francisco Boira, professor and artist

Notes

1. Río Piedras campus of the University of Puerto Rico has 22,000 students and the broader undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral programs of all UPR system as well as of the private institutions.
2. Harvard University, University of Alberta, CUNY, University of Michigan, Stanford University, University of British Columbia, among others. Organizations such as Arts Department, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, NY, Australian Network for Art & Technology [ANAT], Design|Media Arts at UCLA School of the Arts and Architecture, Leonardo/ISAST (International Society for Art, Science, & Technology) Architecture, Leonardo, among other hundreds of speakers of different fields and disciplines gather in symposiums to disseminate and share their understandings of the natural blend of science and arts. These symposiums are sponsored by ASCI. Founded in 1988, ASCI is a grassroots organization based in NYC with global membership of about 400 members [and growing!]. It was one of the earliest art-sci-tech member organizations in the United States, and first in NYC. As a “virtual” organization, ASCI has produced public programming for highly recognized NYC area institutions such as: The New York Hall of Science, Liberty Science Center, The Cooper Union, The CUNY Graduate Center, and the American Museum of Natural History, among others. Most recently, with its ArtSci Symposium on Collaboration, it has partnered with prestigious international organizations such as: The Arts Council of England; the Australian Network for Art & Technology; The Banff New Media Institute, Canada; Leonardo/ISAST; The SMARTlab Centre, London; and the Design/Media Department at UCLA.
3. Translation made by Dr. Sandra Macksoud, a social psychologist and a colleague at the College of Education.
4. Andrés Batista teaches the courses of Educational Technology at the University of Puerto Rico. I want to thank Ms. María Cepeda, a collaborator and excellent secretary who transcribed this interview on August 2009.
5. Batista (2007).
6. Term used by Joe Kincheloe (2004b) in his article “Misunderstood world of teacher education.”
7. Miller (2009).
8. Bobby McFerrin demonstrated the power of the pentatonic scale, using audience participation, at the event “Notes & Neurons: In Search of the Common Chorus,” from the 2009 World Science Festival, June, 2009; <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ne6tB2KiZuk>. The *World Science Festival* is an annual celebration of science that brings together great minds in science, business, government, and the arts.
9. A pentatonic scale is a musical scale with five pitches per octave in contrast to a heptatonic (seven-note) scale such as the major scale. Pentatonic scales are very common and are found all over the world, including Celtic folk music, Hungarian folk music, West African music, African American spirituals, Jazz, American blues music and rock music, the Greek traditional music and songs; melodies of Korea, Malaysia, Japan, China, India, and Vietnam (including the folk music of these countries), the Andean music, the Afro-Caribbean tradition, Polish highlanders from the Tatra Mountains, and Western Classical composers such as French composer Claude Debussy.
10. Víctor Torres Rosario is a school mate from my middle and high school years. We were both in the same music program of the school district at Juana Díaz, Puerto Rico. A paper article by Barceló, J. (2010, March). El golpe maestro de la banda (The master hit of the band). *El Nuevo Día*, March 30, p. 57, summarizes his story.
11. Rumbos Fascinantes publishes articles that disseminate achievements of the childhood, youth, teachers, professionals in arts and sciences; also publishes original creations. Josean Torres also was a school mate and the leader of the clarinet section, an inspiration for me.
12. Torres (2009).
13. High School for Health Career and Sciences at the George Washington Campus.

14. This teacher is Olga Charneco, a Puerto Rican artist and teacher who believes in children's potential. She conducts art workshops at the University of Puerto Rico Museum. Angel Díaz is an artisan and art teacher at the University of Puerto Rico Elementary School.

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Chapter 4

Sewing an Authentic Text or *Mundillo* Within College Contexts

Once you feel in charge of your classroom, many things can go wrong, even if you have prepared everything. You need the rest of the classroom—the audience as collaborator—to make sense out of education as a process of resistance and struggle.

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Sewing a Text Within the Classroom: Emotions and Creative Tensions

The pleasure of teaching is, in itself, an act of resistance, given the multiple criticisms that are made of teachers and professors, the rampant cynicism that operates in society, and the boredom reflected by our students regarding the process of teaching. If we do not recognize this historic and cultural reality it is not possible to do honest and fruitful work. This is why I say that this work has thought-feeling qualities, just as thought-feeling is the person that writes this, in that this person does nothing else than feel, and thinks about what is felt, and thinks locating the feeling in what has been thought. It is deliberately written in the first person, in order to dialogue with those own desire to read it. It is a dialogue that becomes didactic according to the theme suggested and at the same time becomes very personal and testimonial as an intimate piece of my biography. It is precisely the dialectics of the relations between *emotion and thought* that gives meaning to this book in the essays presented here. Each section is a piece of the *mundillo*¹ that I have woven with the context and the persons with whom I have shared my spaces and professional work. But it is also a pretext for the presentation of various concepts: pedagogy as a practice of emotion in movement; science-art as an ontological necessity of the living and historic human; and the pedagogy of the street as an inherent practice for those who can read the world with political clarity.

From these concepts I analyze and delve into what have been my experiences as a university professor, and workshop leader of teachers, parents, youth, and girls and boys, learning great lessons from the implication of having power. Constantly going and coming along the continuum of theory and practice, emotions reveal themselves as a permanent reference that we are all beans of a social fiber. The anger, the shame, the jealousy, envy, fear, happiness, sadness, anguish, kindness, love, and friendship, with their corresponding definitions, descriptions, analysis, and some meaningful keys are ever present in a healthy and respectful intervention from the perspective of the professor. With passion I discuss the process of living conflicts within artistic expression and in words, in the play—in the ludic activity and teacher creativity—, in thoughtful activities... and in those improvised where we would discover the past that would summon our rage, and be able to *deactivate it*, be a real or fantasized, but always with calm, contention, and kindness. As Freire referred to it in his *Teachers as Cultural Workers*, in the first letter titled *Reading the World/Reading the Word*, “as we teach, not as bureaucrats of the mind but reconstituting the steps of our curiosity—(...) teachers who perform as such have a rich moment of learning in their teaching” (1998, p. 17). Indeed, to manage emotions in teaching is a challenge to those who dare teach.

In order to raise concepts of (e)motions and feelings in my pedagogy I was literally introspective in my classes, courses, and memories. Fortunately, learning as part of a life process is relatively easy for those like me who think that there are spiritual and ludic aspects of our vocation. As bell hooks points out:

To teach in a manner that respects and cares for the souls of our students is essential if we are to provide the necessary conditions where learning can most deeply and intimately begin (Hooks, 1994, p. 13).

To educate as a practice of freedom and authenticity is a way of teaching for everyone to learn. It must be easy, since freedom is a natural value. But in modern societies, as a cultural landscape of the human action, education is by definition a conditioned situation, controlled mainly by the state or dominant groups with a particular ideology. This is why critical educators, who generally come from this modern tradition, have the duty of rethinking and reinventing education in order to alter the human landscape of culture and alternative paths. I dare say that sharing personal and collective hopes and fears is part of our mission, since information accounts for only the accumulation of data. It takes much more strength to be creative and effectively emotional to teach and learn with joy.

My first step in a college classroom as a professor was one of the most emotional moments in my entire life. My whole body was dancing to the sounds of the ideas that I wanted to transmit almost magically, with little awareness of my profound ignorance and what it takes for the real and authentic “lesson” to emerge in. Lacking any formal college-level teaching experience, I had to immediately recognize the gap between my aspirations and my skills. There was a tension with which I had to work creatively and carefully. My pedagogical practices and ideas interconnected inevitably with the students’ voices—in the form of vignettes, opinions, and questions—emerging from the mutually illuminating interplay of critical constructivism; human rights education; school, educational, and clinical psychology; and anticolonial pedagogy. This complex and unique blending of perspectives has been an engaging standpoint from which to work. Expanding beyond ideological boundaries, this dynamics has made it possible for me to imagine and create pedagogical practices that engage the questioning of dominant culture biases in curricula, in assessment tools, and in approaches to teaching.

I can be empathetic with students, that in many cases, who come from domesticating or oppressive educational experiences. They are taught to say what the professor wants to hear and their tensions lie in whether what they say will be meaningful for the professor or if it will be taken as a stupidity of little importance, because in many instances I have felt that way and shared similar emotions. As professors we have been the perpetrators of such an intellectual colonialism; this is precisely why it is important to educate for freedom of thought and the establishment of ideas for social justice. Let us be clear that the process of domestication, as expressed by Paulo Freire, is not only present when voices are silenced, referring to the absence of local articulation, but also to the silencing or muzzling of any knowledge that might contribute to changing the established order. The comfortable position of having others dictating the standards is deceitful to the dignity of all students and is our responsibility to decode such a context. It takes a pedagogy in (e)motion to connect ideas, art science, and science-h-art [sounds *heart*] in order to systematize and give coherence to a journey where you do not want to feel like you are a lonely passenger. This journey takes me, inevitably, to rethink each strategy

and anti-method methodology, because it is reinvented and written constantly and meticulously.

As in a reflective diary, I review each class with its ups and downs, conscious of the important role of emotions in the expanding of ideas, tools, and symbols. As in any act of writing it also implies a semiotics, a signology, and a technology to signify the result of episodic memory that is in it selective and subjective. My reflexive accounts are also the most elaborate fabric of the text, because they contain my conclusions and help to weave the next class. Since interpretation is a narrative of a past event, I always return to it in order to understand myself and the meanings of my own stories. As a psychologist debriefs herself from her sessions, I too do my personal interpretive debriefing of my own pedagogy. From this exercise, which is like a pedagogical psychoanalysis, I recollect the material to be sewn and interconnected with the rest of the curriculum. From a historic-cultural perspective of human development and learning, it is important to recognize that brain activity is always mediated by instruments and signs; language is the principal mediator in the formation and development of the superior psychological functions; and language compresses different ways of expression: oral, gesticular, written, artistic, histrionic, musical, mathematical, and iconographical.

The Active and Creative Learning Needs (E)Motion and Intention

Living as a conducive source of intimate and communicative situations of being permits the fluidity of very social experiences. Vygotsky himself said that living is the union of the personal and the medium, is like an internal disposition of the human being with one or various moments of reality. This is why it promotes a small reflection of the themes addressed in previous sessions in the situations that surround us in real time. Our attempts to intentionally link the subjective perceptions of all and to listen to one another is something like doing a pedagogy of living because it permeates all activity of learning, whether during school time or not. Because of this, as expressed by Cuban professors Junco and Bonet (2008), on the basis of a unity of affective cognition we should promote educative actions then advanced holistic development to encourage potential interests, motivations, and the necessities of our students. The creative and active dimension of learning is a counterpart of reproductive, memoristic, and mechanical behavior that some call learning. How can mechanical and affect-disconnected behaviors be thought stimulators? It is difficult to fathom that from simple repetition, without personal elaboration, one could contribute to the development of thought.

To develop progressive and holistic education is like weaving the complicated *mundillo*, difficult and delicate, but strong and possible; this is how I conceive of the experience of learning in the university classroom. As critical educators we must place our bets in favor of democracy and dialogue in our classrooms, but we must also demystify its insufficiency in order to create more fair and critical classrooms. This is important because power relations, making necessary the exercise of negotiations and agreements in a constant dialogue, always guide democracy. Each

narrative is like a microworld of our consciousness, so we need to strengthen and provoke opportunities for more narratives. Dialogue itself is a very intriguing task; you may have an agenda with good intentions, but it will flow by the forces of the interlocutors, their ideologies, values, and contradictions. We learn from the point of our interpretation of the dialogical experience when this itself becomes the work of our instrumental activity and a pedagogical challenge.

In the context of the living and continuing classroom, with its own and changing texture, there exists an entire system that includes the students, their experiences, their questions, my ideas, my preoccupations, the projects of other faculty members, and our commitment to our community. As part of my pedagogical focus I always invite my students to participate in serious critiques of my educational practices, which have offered many instances of growth in my own pedagogical movement and sense, at once passionate and risky; in other words, a pedagogy in (e)motion, where cognition is always informed by emotions, movement, and passion. We cannot think that because we do things with the best of intentions but these will not be dangerous, exclusive, or without meaning. The thoughtful and spontaneous use of movement and emotions that provoke and are provoked by social activity is crucial to the weaving of a text in a class that is authentically human and inclusive. But the energy and intention alone are insufficient if we are to move beyond our comfort zones to those zones of problematization. Our energy can be an ally if it is directed with criticality, ethically, and with purpose. Consonant with this, I have always enjoyed reviewing Kincheloe's assumptions about the critical educator. How critical can we be after being critical? It is a question of focus: like a good pair of binoculars, the lands are tools, but the objective is what guides the focus and without this our lens would be a useless tool. Notwithstanding, from a historical-cultural perspective, instruments evolve to the degree that those who have made them evolve; the lenses need to change to the rhythm of a culture if we are to appreciate development as historically contextualized.

Love + Emotion + Wisdom = *Radical Love*

In this section we will explore and discuss love as a political, social, and even biological act.² The ideas and vignettes presented here are pivotal to the dialectical nature of human acts, such as teaching, learning, nature transformation (culture), thinking, and loving. This dialectical stance allows me to situate the concept of utopia at another level—as an act, not just an idea—on a reachable but unfinished plane; of transformation; being, and at once, essential for life. As Freire has pointed out in many occasions, reason and emotion must work together.

This is a short tale that dates some 15 years back. More than a story it is a lesson, because there are stories that are not just stories when they are told. In a story, a good story, there reside elements of an authentic life, of real experience, but upon reflection become profound knowledge. Panamanian singer-songwriter Rubén Blades in the chorus to a hit song in his 1978 album sings: "*Maestra vida, camará, te da y te quita, te quita y te da.*" (teacher life, comrade life, it gives and takes, it takes and it gives). I offer this story to my research assistant, Tamara Babilonia (who

5 years ago graduated with her master's in education), one day after my birthday in 1997. The story reads as follows:

Los ojos querían salir de sus cuencas aunque muriesen. . . pero por primera vez en su vida no estarían sujetos a lo que el cuerpo quisiese hacer aunque solo por poco tiempo. Sólo eran sueños. (The eyes wanted out from their sockets even if it meant death. . . for the first time in their lives they wouldn't be subjected to what the body wanted to do, if only for a moment. They were only dreams.)

No fue hasta que el cuerpo tuvo un violento accidente que hizo que los ojos se liberasen de las cuencas y mientras caían al piso; volaban. Miraban, pero miraban lo que la violencia con la que habían sido expulsados les permitían mirar- y descubrieron, tarde, que en realidad no podían ser libres fuera del cuerpo, solo en él." (It wasn't until after the body had a violent accident in which the eyes were liberated from their sockets and as they fell to the floor; they flew. They looked, but they looked at that which only the violence with which they had been expelled allowed them to see—and they discovered—too late, that they could not be free outside of the body, only within).

With the story, he often recommended that a biblical verse be consulted in verse 1: Corinthians 12–27—wrote., then cited the verse:

"Ni el ojo puede decir a la mano: No te necesito, ni tampoco la cabeza a los pies: No tengo necesidad de Nosotros/as." (not even the eye can tell the hand: "I don't need you", nor the head tell the feet: "I have no need for us").

I dare to outline what, to my understanding, and from my experience with the "text," with the mentioned work, Freire has said; especially in matters of love and utopia, two concepts well discussed and engendered throughout his pedagogical pilgrimage through the world. Freire's book is a call to wake up toward a utopian vision, not impossibility or unreality, nor from a pragmatic or functionalist perspective. Instead, his work supports the recognition of the possibility of work toward a future dreamed of, but parting from the presence with a hopeful faith of those that do not sleep, and if necessary to lose sleep in order to realize the dream. Grounded in his experience and conviction, Freire (in *Pedagogy of Hope* and *Teachers as Cultural Workers*) demonstrates to those who practice and read him, that we must accept the challenge and commend ourselves to our own humanity in that space least known to us which has been altered by the false reality that does not allow us to see "the other"; this other person, so necessary for the reaffirmation of our own collective conscience and the only reason for our able, cultural, and historical selves: to be persons (Zambrana-Ortiz, 2003).

In the face of the challenges that reading Freire's works represented, alongside the challenges made manifest by a group of university Christians—*Grupo La Escalerita* (The Stairway Group) from UPR³—that invited me to speak about love, arose an outline of the following poem:

Para qué me sirve una escalera? (what good is a ladder for?)
 Para la transgresión. (To transgress)
 Para traspasar espacios, fronteras y situaciones límites. . . , (to trespass spaces, frontiers and limited situations)
 Para alcanzar a otro, para llegar a una misma (to reach another, to arrive at oneself)
 Cuando queramos ser más. . . , (when we want to be more. . .)

Para volver al punto de inicio y reconocer que nuestras (to return to the beginning point and realize that our weaknesses and talents have us using the steps of our lives). debilidades y talentos nos mantienen usando los peldaños de la vida (Zambrana-Ortiz, 2003, p. 55).

The ladder as a symbol of an instrument of transgression and progress, for teachers, psychologists, philosophers, and counselors—is a human labor, purely cultural and historical—from a Vygotskian position (Rogoff, 1998)—that makes possible action and reflection toward solidarity—love/passion—and Utopia—the possible dream. The latter is a cultural construction that physically serves to get closer—for example—and we can also allude to the ladder abstractly for a thousand uses in a thousand ways thanks to language. Notwithstanding, without the social reference to why it is needed, it will not exist. And so, love—in concrete social and personal acts—is as much a cultural product as it is the ladder. In the exposition regarding psychology and love, love is amplified from the point of the social-cultural posture of its alterity. Freire denotes love as a political and human act. Regarding love and revolutionary praxis—both inseparable—he can speak to us from the future patent “more from here than from there.” Ernesto “Che” Guevara, through Freire, in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, and recapturing the spirit of the content from a *Pedagogy of Hope* (Pedagogía de la Esperanza, Spanish version) tells us:

... It was that way, through a dialogue with the peasants, then their revolutionary praxis took on a definitive sense. Yet what, Guevara did not express, maybe because of his humility, is that it was precisely this humility and his capacity to love that made possible his “communion” with the people. And this communion, undoubtedly dialogical, became collaboration. (p. 220)

It can be affirmed that the ends of a truly teaching labor must be consonant with the revolutionary commitment to love other persons. A pedagogy through which girls and boys, and men and women cease to be objects of privilege, punishment, or mercy and instead become subject protagonists of rights and responsibilities links by the solidarity oath a reciprocal love. That is, they become persons that are anchored in their possibilities and talents, not in their social conditions, conformance, and alienated being left only to fuel the dominant ideology of being “neutral.” Education is not neutral. It is entirely a political act of assuming positions and struggles.

It is not sufficient, as such, for those of us that assume pedagogy as a practice of hope, that we simply teach curricular content or material. This focus is insufficient for a liberating pedagogy. It is necessary to educate in order to own the content and generate ideas, permitting for the generation of diverse locations from which others learn and view the world. Education is not neutral. We are not apolitical because our acts are politically contextualized. We must make others conscious that education and social transformation require that we assume positions, and that we embrace certain values attitudes, while rejecting others. Also, our intellectual honesty and respect toward each learner demands that we not be neutral in our own readings of the world and that we have political clarity.

The authentic stories, family anecdotes, oral history, the living dialogue, the analysis of discourse, political discussions, the exploration of reality through

illustrations, are valuable and vital resources to teaching for freedom in the quest for utopia. These activities permit us to appropriate the knowledge that will lead us to the actions that will transform reality. The controversies and questions that arise become on ending sources for the resolution of conflicts and the mediation, through problematization, of the study of social situations. The most valued and creative educational resources are the ideas born of feelings, testimony, and lived experiences of university community in its daily and historic experience. This is why it remains indispensable that we contextualize education and this way generate knowledge from the practice of a participatory dialogue. The lyrics of singer-songwriter Jean Manuel Serrat urges us to recognize the utopian spirits in Freire:

*¡Ay! utopía, cabalgadura que nos a vuelve gigantes en miniatura. . . dulce como el pan nuestro de cada día, . . . incorregible, que no tiene bastante con lo posible, que levanta huracanes de rebeldía. . . Ay utopía, cómo te quiero, porque les alborotas el gallinero, . . . por que alumbras los candiles del nuevo día. (from song *Utopía*, 1992, in Album-BMGA Ariola S.A.)*

(Oh utopia, beast of burden that makes of us miniature giants. . . as sweet as our daily bread. . . incorrigible, unsatisfied with possibility, that raises hurricanes of rebellion. . . Oh utopia how I love you, because you stir up the henhouse. . . because you lighten up the candles of the new day).

Through a careful study of the concept of utopia as presented and discussed by Ferrater Mora (1994) we might think that it is not in sync with the Freirean concept outlined by Serrat. New concept in view from the perspective of the “philosopher” appears deformed by “antiquity” and the pessimistic tone that characterizes it. They—for the dictionary-speak of utopia as “the ideal, especially of human society, that is often unreachable” and “utopic equals, in many cases a perfect model” (p. 743). From a Freirean position, we would reject the idea of a finished or closed society; instead, we take the position of a society in process, on the path toward “the possible dream” and in constant change, in the presence of contradictions that become important discussions, but reveal the social-historic and cultural nature of human beings and with the sparks of revolutionary politics.

Being Subversive and the Sum of Emotions with Reason

I was not a very publicly vocal university student. But I was—and continue to be—very militant and conscious of injustice and of the popular methods to resist, thanks to the political spirit that always has been present in the University of Puerto Rico. As an undergraduate I learned skills to deal with authority and I was a representative and defender of the rights of graduate students. I was also firm and energetic in denouncing poor professional practices and proposed some curricular changes to both professors and the administration. And I was successful in that scenario with my colleagues because I always practice questioning in order to defend myself, and if it was good for me, ethically, I had to do the same with others. At that time I was not plainly conscious that my acts were political in nature, but I was conscious of the urgency for justice, one of the political axis of the political dimension of pedagogy.

In the process of maturing as a citizen I came to see and feel the intimate relationship between struggle, ideological positioning, and pedagogy. My interest in subverting the status quo I owe to an affective connection always presents in me between ideas of injustice, inequality, and the exercise of power. The conduits through which these values are filtered and become verbs are the emotional fibers that embrace them and motivate our feeling-thinking being.

This reminds me of my years as a high school student dancer, when I felt assertive and powerful as a student, and only 16 years of age. During the summer of 1979, the Department of Education was challenged with the responsibility of the opening and closing ceremonies of the Games—with official artistic performances. The DE recruited 10,000 students, 400 teachers, and 30 supervisors of Fine Arts and Physical Education from around the country.⁴ Teachers were assigned to different areas: dance, music, rhythmic exercise, and mosaics and murals. Imagine, 10,000 students, teachers, and supervisors from the public system, housed on the facilities of Ramey, a former U.S. Air Force in Aguadilla, Puerto Rico,⁵ for 6 weeks. In this wide space there was very little space for student deliberation about conditions or requests, no space for criticism or critique or for recommendations from the student body, even though it was all part of the Department of Education. The mission of the choreographers was to present 16 dances of different countries projecting an international flavor to a pan-American audience. From the previous success of this project, the Education Department decided, in July of 1979, to create the division of Recreation and Cultural Projects (RCP).

As a student I had many discrepancies with authority, though I considered myself quite conservative and obedient. Today, I realize that the limitations represented a secure area for many of us, the thousands of adolescents from 7th to 12th grade (12–17 years old). It was a world ordered by others, with an impenetrable hierarchy. Of course, authority was everywhere: the teachers, the choreographers, and the director of the camp. . . I remember reverting the order of things in little small ways such as being the only female in my building who read during the hours of the night (with a flashlight because we were not supposed to have lights on after 8:00 p.m.). I would engage others in conversations about the politics of our country and raised many questions while I conspired to have a good time with my special friend. I worried about our conditions and the little communication we had with our families. I was fortunate enough to have a calling card, but the majority did not. It did not take me long to become an advocate of my peers helping things to change a little. During the idle hours, I would advise many male youths that seemed anguished and withholding repressed desires for sex while others felt gay emotions. I was like an advocate for my peers. My vocality and persistence brought me some positive results and soon our conditions were made less restrictive socially and emotionally. The supervisor and teachers thought I was a good role model for my peers; purpose was far from true. However, love and affection expressions were highly monitored and I was sanctioned for kissing a boyfriend. I remember my words to the principal choreographer: “How come you can express your love and we can’t?” I was punished as they punish most principled answers: by removing me from a position of major exposition and relocating me in the group of substitutes, that is, I was not

to dance. Although that hurt, I never regret my actions. On the contrary I decided to prove my coordination and enthusiasm by dancing and creating new steps backstage. We were really free because we were less important, less visible. I remember saying to my peers: “we can make them notice us if we want to.” We succeeded. We were like the alter ego of the choreographer because our dance steps and coordinated improvisation gave them other perspectives and another vision. And we were then admired; we had something to show. Today I still share with some of these friends, and we all remember kindly those times. I must say that the camp experiences paved my adolescent life because I learned to maximize the conditions of the oppressive context. It was all about the context, the passion, and the convenience of transgressions.

Intentionality: It Takes an Initial Proposal

As part of my approach in my courses, I invite the students to raise serious questions of my teaching. This means taking very seriously the transgressions of the students. One particular moment, in the beginning of my career in college, was when a student confronted me with my assessment tools. She was loud and disrespectful, but her request was a question expressed in front of the class: “Don’t you think that this assessment tool is vague and ambiguous? What is it that you want from us?” I always remember this event because of its multiple meanings for me as an educator. Signified that by review with seriousness my assessment practices and the construction are of a biological climate in the negotiations of power with my students. In all of his works, Freire urges us to not be educators for domestication and that we dare to take risks—as is the case in an honest dialogue—that always accompanies the processes of questioning and creativity. Creativity is especially important and can be encouraged to the degree that we become pedagogues of (e)motion, for the germ of creativity is delicate and at the same time restless. It also requires the connection of (art-science) *arteciencia*.⁶

Critical teachers are not politically neutral, as they identify with a critical system of meaning and all of its convictions. This critical system of meaning must be developed and promoted from early schooling experiences. Moreover, in a teacher preparation program this must be fostered. The difference between critical teachers⁷ and teachers who see themselves as neutral is that critical practitioners admit to their political preference. On a daily basis, teachers and college students choose to include some forms of knowledge while excluding others from the curriculum. They legitimate particular beliefs while delegitimizing others. Fields of knowledge, as Foucault reminds us, will take their forms as a result of the power relations of discursive practices (in Kincheloe, 1993). Thus, the courses of action teachers take will reflect forms of pedagogical knowledge that have been officially legitimated by publishers, colleges of education, and school districts. As time passes such knowledge comes to be viewed not as a political discourse but as unquestioned and “safe” common sense. This is the relevance of being engaged in a pedagogy of (e)motion, and being willing to construct a system of meaning which can take student’s requests and questioning into serious intentional reflections about assessment and judgment.

Born in my interpretation of the experience does not light which provoked in me emotions of disgust and surprised mixed feelings, I found a space within which to expand and redefine new tools of assessment.

Unendless Weaving of the *Mundillo* for Good Discussions

In the presence of a few interpretations and risks taken by the students, I tend to provoke them, firing at them uncomfortable and suggestive questions, then begin to observe some interesting interpretations, but always giving them the space to react. “Gee professor you are asking us to do something which we have never done.” I ask them: “And you feel like doing it? Feel like falling in love with an impassioned in yourselves for that which you will do the rest of your lives?” Immediately I invite them to attempt to give themselves the opportunity to problematize their doubts and fears. Their incredulous faces are the result of many years of domestication and “banking education.” And many professors are much too bottled up in theories and readings while forgetting to create the environments for a ludic motivation. For me, it is here with the concepts of play and thought that we make good workshops, using children’s traditional games, where motor skills are involved triggering a stupendous situations. We cannot create a workshop for elementary school teachers that propose to teach learning, writing, at addition and subtraction without physically feeling the movements that without a doubt were the origin of those skills. The following is a diagram, a graphic, and a visual idea of how ideas and mental states operate in a pedagogy in (e)motion (Fig. 4.1):

Discomfort is created or provoked to move people in a good way: a rhetorical question. For example: Why was the Golden “Coquí”⁸ made extinct? And why and how could schools be made extinct? With this I began my class one day. I had had a heated discussion—very emotional and intellectual—with a comedy that I admire. We discussed whether our students and future teachers should complete their field experiences in schools that do not make up the state’s plans for improvement, that is, that are not deemed model schools. I reminded my colleague that nearly 50% of our schools are part of an Improvement Plan as a result of the No Child Left Behind.⁹ Understanding that some of the best examples of pedagogical practices are conducted in schools, that are not part of the “improvement plans” (in reference to the NCLB Reform), the question of the Golden Coquí engendered considerable discomfort. What accounts for the extinction of a species? Is it because it is too stupid to pass the “tests and” of a manipulated and polluted environment?

Many studies on the effectiveness of the programs of teacher education and field based experiences of the students (Sobel & Taylor, 2005; Taylor & Sobel, 2001; Macksoud, 2008) have revealed that the majority of our graduates find themselves in schools very different from those which they attended during their own preparation. To develop resiliency in our students we need to expose them to schools where teachers, students, and school personnel can represent a challenge so both students and the school take real advantage of each other, as well as universities and professors that should act as mediators and collaborators.

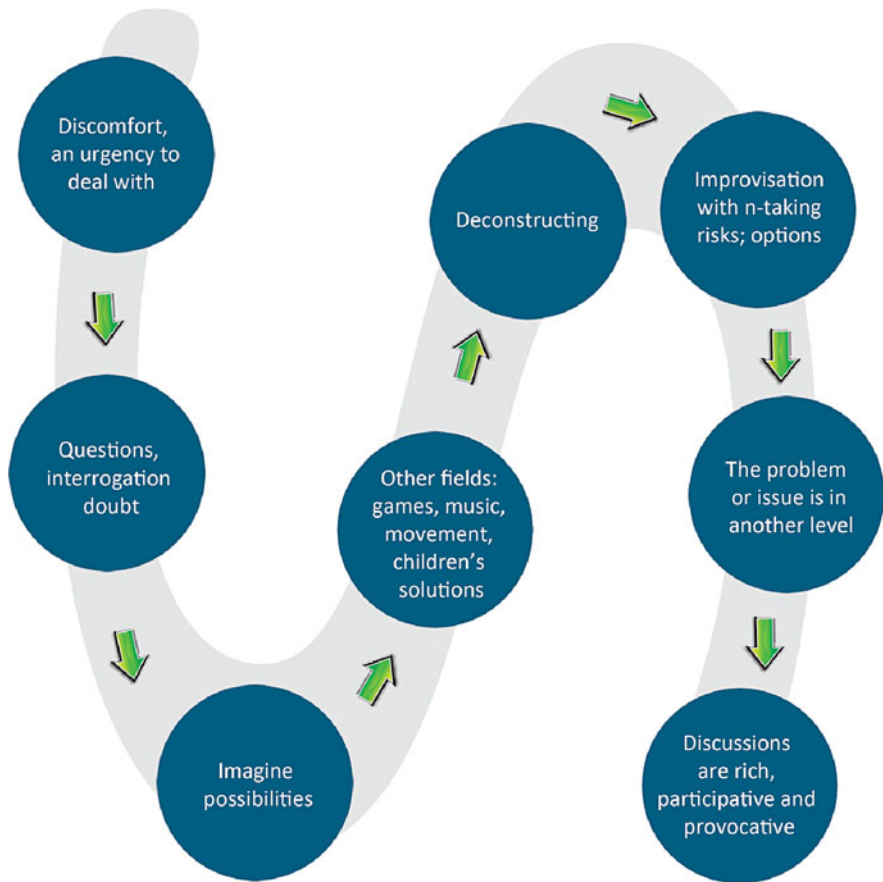


Fig. 4.1 A creative ongoing process in a *moving* pedagogy (graphic concept edited by Dr. Juan Vadi)

We must consider the points of intersection between the experience of our students, questions related to their line of questioning about reality, epistemological curiosity, and the corresponding data of the disciplines. The ability to relate personal experience with the concepts of the discipline and then the collective experience of the student body with the disciplines is part of what we need to do in our own classrooms. Critical and dialectical constructivism considers that, in teaching and in psychological interpretation and thinking, everything is more than the sum of its individual parts. This was a maxim of the humanism and Gestalt¹⁰ that to me has been central with respect to the ways in which I develop situations, in my own private practice as a school psychologist and as a professor at the public university. In the words of Kinchloe, it would be an epistemological assault of critical thinking if we doubt of the interpretative capacity of our students. In that manner, I must reject lineal procedures or those too inclined to prediction without qualitative corroboration.

Accompaniments to Generate Zones of Proximal Development

From a cultural-historic and critical vision, the university classroom should be a space for the generation of conversations and concerted actions, or language functions as an instrument for the making of connections, invention, and problematization. We have a tapestry that connects us at a very profound level of our being creating a field for the alignment of forces and coalition that produce a tremendous power for the invention of new realities from our conversations and multiple forms of scaffolding. This work demonstrates that the mentoring of peers, workshops, and collaborative work are all effective learning strategies for future educators. As professors we need to move with our students; our pedagogy must be relational, that is, it must become a verb in the interactive mediation of dispositions, values, ideas, and positions. Only in this way can we leave relations that connect us in a profound manner creating a field for the alignment of our strengths and volition.

Our learning is authentic when it is entangled with emotions. This affirmation is one of the conceptual basis that I have conceived in a pedagogy in (e)motion. Supporting me are various critical pedagogues like bell hooks, Joe Kincheloe, Paulo Freire, Lev Vygotsky, and neuroscientists like Antonio Damasio, and scientists like Humberto Maturana that confirm and affirm the crucial role of emotions in our system of logical thought, our divergences, the making of decisions, and the solution of problems. We have a brain as emotionally evolved as it is cognitively, with qualities that strengthened the bridge between body and mind, reason and affect; and this obligates us to create a pedagogy based on cultural action. I thus defend that there is no thought without emotion, and this exposition will attempt to bring closer both constructs—emotion and cognition—in order to not separate these in the practice of critical pedagogy this practice will additionally contribute to the values of solidarity that help us overcome the imposed values of academic individualism.

Accompanying and Mentoring University Students

In order to propose ideas to the question of the workshop I have acceded to think about two wide themes: the vision of curriculum—the “highway” of education, as it is referred to by Costa Rican curriculum specialist Alicia Sequeira; and the vision of living together from a historic-cultural liberating perspective. The fusion of intellectual-affective activity is a necessary foundation, because of this a pedagogy in (e)motion is a good beginning. I am convinced that the historic-cultural and liberating perspectives in education and in all human endeavors point us toward a critical analysis and the creative transformation of the curriculum in the forms of living together in the university and that from their the most humanistic projection of the school, above all else in our practice as teacher educators. In fact, it graciously enriches the scenarios of the pedagogical practices in our communities, be they urban or rural. It allows us to explore the knowledge of the streets and the communities to convert these and validate them as “sources of knowledge” renaming them street pedagogy.

The Dialectic Activist's Focus and Educational Practice

Contextualize learning is a theory proposed by anthropologist J. Lave and is based on John Dewey's theories of the value of experience in learning, and the theories of learning constructed from social action, articulated by Lev Vygotsky. Both theories reside in the paradigm of social constructivism, also referred to as dialectical. Paulo Freire (1974), in his work *Concientización* established that:

Problematizing education is founded on creativity and stimulates an action in true reflections upon reality, responding, in that way to the vocation of those humans that are not authentic beans, if not when they are committed to the search for creative transformations. (pp. 87–88).

Then, if a curriculum is a plan, this plan must be concerted, and should contain unintentional and programmatic topics of study that, on the basis of some rationale or fundamentals, it is "intended" to organize objectives and content activities in a sequential and coordinated form to give structure and facilitate the process of teaching and learning. However, to accomplish educational objectives and goals for the community of learners curriculum must be elastic and organic. And yet, the space reinvention must remain as a fundamental part of the curriculum. Without this disposition, we would lose the opportunity to re-view the curriculum and critique it. Also, the educator needs to learn to deal with the creative tension between the word and silence. . . the solidarity and responsible experience to listen, to question and dialogue; to engage in a critical reading of the text and context, to assume a risky disposition, to understand the dialectical tension between patients and impatience, to overcome the polarization of manipulation versus spontaneity, and to be humble and respectful, being coherent in word and action: words by Freire in *Letters to Those Who Would Dare to Teach* (1998). We learned parting from an interpretation of our experience (work as instrumental activity), emerged in social networks that are configured in particular contexts that constitute the basis for the formation of individual culture. These networks are in constant movement throughout time; as processes of historical construction our classrooms are examples of this; our students change more rapidly than we, but they and the cultural instruments of their epoch change us.

Learning for cultural action creates environments of reflective practice in which the participants collaborate and are involved in an authentic task that is constantly changing through the use of different tools. Intelligence emanates from those groups, knowledge is formed in an organized manner within a social-cultural context, and learning is an activity guided by intention and reflection and recognizes the schools as intelligent organizations.

Teaching-Student Project: Space in the Classroom

In this section I will share with you the pedagogical experiences in which calculated risks, creativity, and intention are generated. Additionally, I will demonstrate instances where the scaffolding of the mentoring process were revealed, through

the use of workshops where the ingenuity of collaboration, collaborative tests, and creative writing became sources of an enriched pedagogical experience. These are the products of a long process called reflexive experience: if anything validates experience it is that we know very little about everything. The reflection of my practices, my errors and mishaps, dialogues with colleagues, and the critiques of students have provided the terrain for the invention and eventual innovation that pointed me toward a redesigning and the creation of participatory spaces and activities with the power to engage in more horizontal and democratic decision making.

Practices and Concrete Examples of a Community of Learners

We analyze elaborated projects and educational experiences from a historical-cultural and liberating perspective. In the same manner, we identify challenges and strategies to incorporate subprojects in a historic-cultural and liberating perspective in redesigning the curriculum and the reorganization of living together in the school and university or any other space as seen in the broader community.

Mentoring Between Professors and Students

The testimonies in, and outside my classes, in the hallways, lobbies, consultation in my office, the consultations and mentoring online favored the use of technologies as a cognitive tool, as much in the process of learning and teaching as an assessment, like those activities provided in the course that were ludic and social. They also favored the use of virtual communication tools provided by Communication Information Technologies (CITs); and to enrich the didactic experience in the use of multimedia presentations the use of videos, digital photos, and others. The use of multimedia was particularly useful for the presentation of their research projects. The discussion forum became tool for focus groups and the collection of data from one virtual subgroup in which anonymous participants were permitted.

Some examples:

- *The online discussion forum is an experience that enriches our knowledge, because we all learn from one another. “We expose our ideas, knowledge, and points of view, in this way debating in a respectful manner. We see different angles to a single answer helping one to later develop their own conclusions.”*
- *What most challenged me were exams on in a virtual form. True, the test will open book, but they were questions that really make you think.*
- *I love the fact that a space was opened to us within which we could express ourselves.*
- *My development is revealed to me by the manner in which I have interacted with the pedagogical resources through the network. I have enjoyed exploring.*
- *I can demonstrate a greater learning and development in this portfolio because here is where I can really visualize those things that most mattered to me throughout the semester.*

- *The most challenging experiences were those in the field and with a little difficulty the discussion forums, since it is a bit difficult for me to remain connected to the Internet, yet they were very good.*
- *The online access to material is a magnificent way to communicate virtually, because seeing one another 3 h out of the week **is not sufficient** to learn what we are interested in knowing what to comment as classmates on what we have learned.*

Peer Coaching

Research has demonstrated that peer coaching is an effective method for professional development. In Las investigaciones demuestran que la mentoría de pares (peer coaching). Studies that have analyzed programs and professional development based on presentations versus those that include peer coaching indicate that given the opportunity to practice skills in a secure and friendly environment results in a much more positive indices in the transference of knowledge and rates of implementation from 0 to 90% (Steve Barkley and Terri Bianco, 2005). Coaching (by peers and experts) is a procedure that shows much promise for affecting teachers' cognitions and for engaging them in reflection.

Mentoring Among Undergraduate and Graduate Students

For some 6 years now I have been entertaining the idea that my university students present their research projects in different conferences and academic meetings in the university. It may be a bit of an interesting twist when I once asked my former undergraduate students, such as Laura Báez, today a master candidate of education, that she mentors some of my students, in order to help them in the preparation of the research projects for my course in the Psychology of Human Development. As a direct result of their experience, the students presented posters of the research projects on the 8th Puerto Rican Congress of Educational Research, celebrated in March of 2005. From this effort ten undergraduate students presented their courses work, and the College of Education institutionalized the participation of undergrad students in the form of poster presentations in future congresses. Below is an example of France's poster presentation, on the 9th edition of the Congress in 2007. She explored and analyzed home environments to determine the prevalence and use of literature in the home, as a resource for literacy development of families, as part of the requirements of the course on Growth and Human Development.

This early entrance of undergrad students in the academic world through action research has been an important catalizer to engage graduate students in voluntary mentoring, as well as for enhancing their own participation as presenters. To exchange time and effort among college students, and to mentor one another requires commitment and solidarity, something I have managed to make them do on a voluntary basis and which has such as guaranteed participation. The graduate student involved receive a stipend as part of her work during the Congress, the Center for Educational Research has always left open its doors for these types of initiatives, and for students who work, have families, and receive no monetary incentive,



Frances Ramirez with her poster: *Contexts enriched by literature*

the social and personal incentive of working in these areas is very gratifying. The Center for Educational Research offered its support by giving materials, equipment, and space. The students managed to present their works, elaborate them, live them as a curricular academic experience; developed their oratory competencies, research, writing skills, and professional relationships; enriched their professional esteem; and established links with other members of their peer group, research professors, and the university as a research community.

Online Forums—Learning in Pairs, Mediation, and Frameworking

In another dynamic in which we posted the form online, the students and the professor engaged in an online workshop to demonstrate and live the framework experience. The experience of having someone that is a little more able than one in something, a manual skill, or task, and to place herself or himself in the position of teacher and as such to demonstrate to another how to complete the task was a very productive activity. As adults, university students “have lost”—and many professors also—the humility and patience to provide sensible support—or frameworks—for another with less skills. In general, the advantaged students reproduce the attitudes, directive conduct, and impatience of the professors. Given this, the experience was quite special for the students. The demonstrations were held in the class, what the comments on the activity were posted online. The virtual modality contributed in a way that the students and professors were able to “visit” all the participants and comment.

Forum: Learning in pairs, mediation, and theoretical framework

Subject: Cooperative learning

Today we had the experience in the classroom of being able to put in practice those competencies which are still developing in us and that in the future will make us better teachers. Today consisted of organizing ourselves in pairs and of teaching something to our counterpart that we consider ourselves pretty good at or expert. In my case, I had the opportunity to work with my classmate Vivian. Since my area of study is music in one of my strengths is the reading of rhythms, I decided I could teach her something fundamental about this skill. And the truth is that she had taken some music classes during her first year at university, so the exercise served as a refresher for our memory. I believe I reached my objective because at the end of the activity she could read a small fragment of rhythm patterns from one of my pieces in University Chorus, and for that I felt very good. For a future application I think I should improve my manner of explaining, making it clearer and more specific, if precisely so that people who do not have that previous knowledge can learn and assimilate more effectively.

The student evaluated herself well, but described that she needed to improve, and yet she felt comfortable because of the student (her counterpart in the pair) and some notions of what she was presenting her in the exercise. And yet, she understood that she needed to improve her form of explaining, the use of language and its forms. There is no better opportunity for self-learning and for the development of a metacognitive conscience than to put our skills as educators to the test with “others” like us. The adult is more vulnerable to learning something new because she or he has internalized the fear of failure and this paralyzes the fluidity of spontaneity and intuition (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996). These situations among adults in a classroom, and that eventually transcended the classroom, became testimony to the possibilities available when we put into practice and evaluate and experiment with concepts within a framework, especially among future teachers. In order to guarantee social learning we should apply interactive, what’s more, mediated by the technologies of communication or a book. Vygotsky expressed, “The social medium is the source (. . .) of social development (. . .) That is materialized in the process of real interaction with present forms and ideas.” (in Junco & Bonet, 2008, p. 153)

Special Exam and the Complexity of Ideas

An assessment technique should help both students and professors to reveal potentialities. On this occasion, I designed an assessment experience that took into consideration many skills: writing, reading, analyzing, judging, discourse, and argumentation, among others. The assessment was announced and described in the syllabus. The students knew that everyone was important because it was a collaborative experience. In this assessment experience to put into practice one of my precepts evaluates as you would wish to be evaluated. I prepare to examine with 20 premises of material previously discussed and studied in class. Those 20 premises have two qualities: they were questions of application and analysis, prepared in a multiple-section form with four alternatives. I prepared a rubric with the following indicators for each question: correct selection, with excellent argumentation in reference (two points); good selection (not the best), or double selection, but

with a very convincing argument (1.5 points); good selection; but incomplete, poor, confusing, or no argumentation (one point); incorrect selection; the time taken to present a good argument (0.5 points); incorrect selection; with no argumentation (0 points). The preparation of the rubric was very challenging for me, but the results were excellent and definitely resulted in a very gratifying assessment. We were all satisfied. The only critique raised was regarding the factor of time; and to this end we dedicated nearly 3 class periods. The students did not only evaluate themselves, but also the social and material conditions of the evaluation. As a mentor, I was at all times supporting them in their efforts and clarifying their doubts. Unimportant detail is that this exercise of assessment convinced me that students value more their attendance in classes where the ideas of theorists are discussed in question and what they have the opportunity to present their doubts and proposals.

Let's take a look at the following narratives:

Tolerable challenge¹¹

who would of thought that her group tests could be so challenging? Definitely, it was. This is the type of exams in many cases can be very criticized, as much by students, as by other professors, and accused of being too radical. Different from other traditional tests, this was a cool operative one in which we all had the opportunity to share our answers and construct a final response.

After all, I believe they should be essence of an exam: put to the test the capacity of the students to share their knowledge, their ideas, and to analyze things there are profoundly using real-life cases: cases that we, as teachers will experience in the near future.

Student 1

Pedagogy in (e)motion in action: the human values are living together

Sincerely, at first I was frightened upon seeing that there were only 20 premises and all very difficult. Later, I had no other option than to confide in myself and all the time that I had dedicated to my studies, it was then that I decided to go forward. In the end, I was satisfied with my answers and I felt comfortable sharing them with my classmates. With this exam, I realize that not everything has to have but one answer, on the contrary each case is particular and has variants that can be very different. I consider tolerance and respectful to qualities as very important talents, and in this test we had to put this into practice.

Student 2

Assessment as a mirror of what I can know

I had the experience of understanding what I had not been able to by simply reading chapters from a book. It was in the discussion with the group that I was able to better understand the strategies and proposed theories.

This test presented problems that we might encounter in the future situations that might allow us to apply certain theories. As many say, "practice makes perfect".

It is not enough to know and understand theories, we must also be able to identify situations in which these can be utilized and applied, and in this way create an ideal and comfortable classroom environment.

Student 3

Defend my ideas and think critically

it is an excellent strategy to promote active discussion among students of the themes at hand and thus better and more clearly understand different strategies and theories presented in the texts. This also promoted critical thinking, different points of view, and a recognition of the errors in different answers being able to identify what we had learned or not learned

in class. The part where we were able to write a comment or a wide two different answers was very important because it obligated us to give reasons for our answers and obligated us to go into depths into the text allowing us to see more than what was revealed to us by a simple and superficial reading.

Student 4

To know the “other” is important

I like the way in which the exam administered; first we have set our own and then we got together in our groups to give our opinions and then as a group arrive at a conclusion for a better answer. Then, as always, there were different ideas and well, it was a matter of dialoguing and putting our points to the test, in order for the group to come to a valid conclusion.

The idea for me was very good, since it gave me the opportunity to interact with my classmates in our virtual group that would also be my group in the debates in the classroom and as such prepared me to share and exchange opinions in a better manner. And since in my case I didn't know anyone in the class and I hadn't taken the class last semester with them well I felt a little uncomfortable, but things are okay now and I feel well working with them, they are good and responsible which is what is most important.

Student 5

(not a teacher candidate, had the course as elective)

Questions of ethics and work styles

Pros and cons of group dialog: I very much liked the fact that I was given the opportunity to dialogue with my classmates and as such offer different ideas in ways that would help us better understand.

But I also felt that I was being held back a little by having some classmates that would ask me, for example, ‘would you put in number eight?, and where did you find it?, and are you going to sustain it?’, among others.

Student 6

These narrated reflections of the students are very revealing and provide us the space for the systematic research of our pedagogical practices and of assessment. The parallel worlds of student and professor should come to an end. Vygotskian mediation aspires that we meet together in the same space that he called “the zone of development,” a zone where the student already masters competencies, and then both student and mentor/coach arrive to a constructed zone of challenge; this is, in a dialectical action, we move forward. Additionally from a historic-cultural lens, the evaluations that we make in our classrooms are always about our students’ developmental capacities, and their growth and advancements as learning beings; as such, all assessment should provide the space for our students to see what they are capable of doing through their own efforts and capable of realizing in supporting and working with others. As Vygotsky (1986) stated: the diagnosis in development should not be limited to the cognitive part but has to be considered a maturation issue.

Tensions: Necessary to Save the Play

Without tensions there are no resume movements, like that which happens in strings in a blow of a violin: there must be tension, a necessary act. The tension of looking at a complete group of students without focus or puzzled, unspoken, and uncooperative was enough motive to leave one dissatisfied—emotions moving ourselves. From the frustration and sadness I had to move to the exercise of “building towers.” Tensions

were crucial, and the emotions contributed to the movement needed to be effective and communicative. The debriefing that I had with two colleagues in the middle of the hall (“hall chats”) were absolutely necessary. Out of frustration, I was motivated to critically understand my mistakes in strategy and focus.

Two groups of 12 student-teachers and 1 task construct a power that reaches the ceiling. This was the challenge. This was the exercise I developed in the midst of my frustration. I say this, because I developed it after a boring class that I had where I tried to talk about constructivism. I had a great reading that the level of difficulty was quite pronounced because it had historical elements that were much too difficult for the students to grasp. The students confessed that they had not read and so I gave a conference, trying to extract some ideas from the group but this became very difficult and most sterile. The frustration became possibility because before they left on that day I asked that each student bring five drinking straws to the next class. I developed the “Exercise of the Towers” which I had from a colleague during a faculty seminar; but which I’ve changed around a bit in order to establish differences among the groups.

The day of the class I divided the groups and the straws I gave to one group, the same group that was given metal paperclips. The other group was given coffee stirrers and masking tape. The groups were given 45 min to construct a tower that extended from the tops of the desks to the ceiling of the classroom. I made various recommendations: that they organize themselves as a group and select their strategies and that they remain very attentive to the process. At the end of the event, I saved the “towers” for the next class and developed the following questions for discussion. The day of the discussion there were more students present (those that had been absent the previous class session). To these I assigned the task of evaluating the already finished “product,” without the benefit of partaking in the process. For our discussion of the exercise we used the following questions:

1. How did we decide upon the structure? What method did we employ?: trial and error, inference and experimentation, intuitive method-improvisation, creative collective method-thought innovation, or emulation.
2. If you had to do it again what changes to make in the design?
3. What was your role?: Observer, critic, support, thinking tool, doubt, information gathering, raising questions, managing the tools, etc.
4. To what do you attribute the group’s results?
6. What made one design stable, sustainable, and at the same time flexible model? What made one of the models more fragile, dependent, and unstable?
7. What metaphors can we make of the act of learning and teaching?
9. What knowledge did you apply in the activity? What knowledge was generated by the activity?

Group Notes¹²:
“Drinking Straws” Group

Methods:

Inference and experimentation to make the base (red straws = strength) and capable of realizing para hacer la base (sorbetos rojos = fortaleza)

Creativity = how to deal with a number of straws so that the tower would reach the ceiling
trial and error = location of antenna, there was no planning
 Intuitive-improvisation = use a straw diagonally to give support
 Changes = instead of having a square roof, make it in a triangular form in order to reach the ceiling.

Roles:

Observer = thinks about the possibility of the idea
 Critic = infers solutions to take the tower to the ceiling
 Support = positive motivation for classmates in group
 Skeptic = doubt the product (pessimist)
 Management of tools = give utility to the materials for the formation of the stable tower

Result = think as one, Corp. Among all in a good attitude.
 We do not think that the materials influence the different designs, instead thinking and methodology of the group members account for the differences.

“Coffee Stirrers” Group Notes

We used the method of intuition-improvisation
 More we can do it again, construct a stronger base, but in any case, tape would be necessary to make it reach the ceiling.
 Materials, time, and a lack of organization were factors that influenced the results.
 The straws were of different strengths.
 The difference of materials and the tape made this straws more stable and the stirrers tower weaker.
 Our tower represents education
 The stirrers are the student and the tape is the teacher. With each step the student takes the teacher gives support.
 There were students who gave well-thought suggestions but we’re not listened to at the moment.

Product Evaluators’ Notes

Students who did not participate from the exercise because they were absent, were put in a an evaluators’ role. They examined the models of towers and engaged in the exercise.
 Possible metaphors

Tower = student
 = teachers technique
 = audacity, coming from knowing
 = creativity

We could say that to determine the structures, all methods were used.
 We came to the conclusion that the materials signify the circumstances that are present in a classroom.
 The knowledge that was in the materials became symbolic for the time it takes to think and forge possibility.
 The concept of the materials: strength and fragility versus adaptation.
 How the tower was assembled, the materials understood in the capacity for the translation of purpose by its participants.
 Metaphors about the students-instruments-circumstances
 Power and thought: how our thoughts are challenged when our ideas are put into practice
 Possibility of change



(picture 1 Students *Carlos, Chloé and Roberto* in the middle of the activity)

We should know the structure of the building and then apply challenge the ideas of the concept.

The group’s notes were revealing with respect to its members and at the same time we are able to see the value of reflection and problematization in the classroom. We can see how groups evaluate themselves on questions, and how they were able to make the transference between a workshop style exercise duration to an understanding of certain key elements relative to the theories of constructivism. Through the workshop—included in the discussion on exercise—the students were able to arrive at different results and evaluate some of the strengths and uncertainties. It was difficult for the “stirrers” group to accept their untruths because they focused on the negative in their reflection process: their product was not sustainable nor stable, but revealed the manner in which they mediated the process resulting in a less-than-functional design. This also reveals, in some way, the manner in which we critique: individualism versus collectivity. As mediator of the activity, I help them focus on

the process and reflect on how they could do it differently. It was here that principal gains were made through the use of metaphors about learning and teaching. From this workshop I learned to better work with readings alternating exercises that would allow for the transference of known situations to those of conceptualization.

The Letter: A Writing of the Being: An Exercise in (E)Motion

In the following I present what happened during class sessions of the course titled Educational Psychology. The students took the themes from a bag, and the challenge was for them to write a letter to someone of their choice in developing the theme they picked from the bag. The themes were: talents, challenges, control, research, failure, plans, debate, connection, difference, and mediation. Each theme was to be worked out in pairs with a presentation at the end of the course. But the immediate task—2 weeks—was to produce a letter for someone. For both tasks—the letter and the presentation—the students were to engage in conversations about the theme throughout the semester. The themes were discussed in diverse forms during the course, for these became central points in our work with models of social and cognitive learning.

In the form of a letter, I wrote the following to the students: that seems worried to challenge. The themes were not chosen by the students. The students were chosen—and rechosen—by the themes. As each letter was read, each student discovered a connection with the theme. One cannot write something that is not born of the being and expect it to be authentic. Authenticity is the being itself and its feeling-thinking constitution is what distinguishes it. It cannot be separated from emotions. “Write from your heart, from your inside,” I told them. I never imagined they would have reacted so well. I should not have doubted, but I did. Once the challenge was posed, I had my bets on their potential and this is exactly what emerged.

The students in the course managed to write from themselves, developing splendid narratives without even knowing what they were doing. They did note that that which drove them was a desire composed of various things: finishing the letter for the class (has a value), speaking to another that is far away, in some way—spiritually, and physically, generationally, ideologically—or that other that circumstantial distance distances them from. They have ridden with honesty, with desire, with inspiration, with tears, with anguish. . . they have done very well. The result has been very natural for many, others had to push the birth, while others had the task already proposed in their lives. Some were overcome with tears as they describe painful histories, others decided to write letters to their grandchildren—yet unborn—to the dead members of their families, remembered and loved, to their brothers in the Army, to future parents, to the students, to their mothers. . . they have moved me with their letters, because of their histories, that are but a stitch in the *mundillo* that entangles them in this thing called the processes of life. Others have spoken from their souls and have drawn us closer to them in their lives. The exercise of speaking with the classmate with which they were paired at the beginning of the course. . . was for some quite difficult but necessary. It was a bet that the inner

action with the “other” was the point of departure for the discovery that knowledge is an encounter of interpretations. For others it was not so, having left it for the last minute, and not knowing where to begin or to whom to direct the letter, time became the cutting edge: Tuesday arrived and it was time to write two paragraphs. How much inspiration is needed for two paragraphs? What do I call inspiration? This cannot be ordered like a pizza; it has to be left to be born, it must be allowed to enter, one must know how to sense it when it is nearly accompanying us, it must be left to flow on the paper. Creativity is not a thing easily described, but is very easy to feel and intuit. And since intuition is prohibited in academia one must bust their brain with that thing called creativity. Csikszentmihalyi, in his book, *Creativity Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention* (1996), reminds us that a learning activity might produce a progression up to the flow channel as new skills are learned and greater challenges are sought on which to exercise those skills. There are very intuitive people; others need to work on potential, creating conditions—material and mental—to let creativity flowing. We must create spaces, for creativity needs time.

Even when there are “no incorrect letters,” the public reading posed other challenges. “This is a process of immersion,” I told them. . . [what is that?] Will they speak much? Think much about the theme? And write the letter? The relationships that they forged with the letters continue to develop and grow. In fact, many red one in a couple of other pages would have become a critical essay. Yes, their relation with the theme became a romance. We must see to it that the romance continues to grow and that they see the contradictions and dilemmas between the theme and themselves: problematization; then the theme and its pragmatic guy mention, it’s functional and transferable that mention: the presentation in the classroom of its application and validity in the school scenario. The theory of Lev Vygotsky again provides invaluable significance, for it is through cultural action mediated by the expressive and figurative language of beings that we generate contexts for our ideas.

The drama of life and that which is radical love—since Freire—draws the emotional tones which we hear: anger, and frustration, rage, happiness. . . and in this way the teams came to life and the ideas became the forms of the themes. It was here that pedagogy became the verb of emotion and movement. The books of Paulo Freire, bell hooks, Joe Kincheloe, Shirley Stengberg, Eleonor Duckworth, and others continue to be beacons which light the path of hope that germinates in each one of our university students that yearns to make sense of their studies, and their struggles, in their day-to-day lives.

During the second round of the letters we heard applause, size, gut wrenching Silence, and exclamations like: WOW! . . . these sessions are deep. . . , as one student said. In a typical day we hear 10 classmates speaking to their boyfriends, their sisters and brothers, relatives in war conflicts, parents, and to their not-yet-born children. Inspired, debate, mediate, challenge, connection. . . with the themes alluded to in their letters. Many feelings were allowed out, even when not considered very poetic, or romantic, or philosophical. Foolishness!!! They were poetic, and romantic, they were sensible and born of solidarity, they were humble and at the same time proud, they insist on saying that they are not satisfied with their creations and while reading the letters were overcome with emotions and at the same time they would connect

with a felt reason, with well-thought reason. The exercise has been tremendous, for we have communicated in another form, with the inner self, and the intimate, the private self that has many voices and only one. There has been literary production, intellectual and reflexive, and development in discursive activity. Here the being reclaimed his or her space to develop and learn from himself or herself. The letters in the second round were also intense in their free prose and very daring; other's personalities unfolded assuming even physical positions that seemed impossible, but made possible by an authentic narrative of the self. Here the classroom also becomes a space for authentic expression.

Feeling the Joy of Learning, Debating, and Interpreting

From a Freirean perspective, the work of the cheerful and optimistic educator is precisely to understand and “to help us realize” the existence and inalterable relationship between education, hope, freedom, utopia, and love. This is necessarily a key epistemological position for the truly successful accomplishment of any educational task. Freire urges us to recognize the relationship between individual conscientization and the conscientization of the “other”—real charity—between unity in diversity—for emancipation and reflexive action—transformative praxis. Likewise is the Freirean notion of “unprecedented viability” that denotes a “belief in the possible dream”; and it’s “necessary idea of tomorrow”—*utopia*—forged from the dance between rage and love, even though some affirm that we must put an end to this history of the dream and of utopia. Freire distinguishes between the position of desperation posited by some postmodern and reactionary thinkers in the position of hope exemplified by progressive postmodernists affirming that the former were frightened upon discovering that they were mistaken in their direction and forget about their leftist stances when playing the power game and becoming subjects and subjected by the grip of power. These have not understood history as possibility. But progress of critics, without fear, a firm the contradictions that brought us modernity with its development of science and acknowledging, and yet reaffirm with hope the transcendence of history.

The thoughtful and also spontaneous use of movement and emotions that provoke and are provoked by social activity is crucial for the weaving of an authentically human text in a classroom. But beware, for an energized class is not always one committed to the values of justice and equity. Energy is not enough to move from a convenient or comfort zone to a more risk-taking zone of problematization and conflict. Conscious of the Cartesian tendency of predictable and sequential pursuit, one of the most important tasks is to educate for interpretation. This is an incredibly delicate detail, like that of creativity. Clearly the more one experiments with the experience of interpreting the world and debate ideas, the more comfortable one becomes with such an exercise. The problem is that we spend too much time speaking of data and not enough time interpreting it, modeling it, and provoking rich interpretations that become healthy educational risks for our students. The

following are reflections of students in their second year in college, collected by the Assessment Office of the College of Education in one of my courses¹³:

Professor does not demand anything specifically, rather she gives us the opportunity to open our minds and expose our ideas.

I find it outstanding the many diverse manners offered by the professor for evaluating the learning of students without being monotonous.

Spontaneity: the option to transform step-by-step educational experience by means of the collective discussion offered.

She used many diverse and dynamic methods for the theme studied: PowerPoint, group work, discussion, videos, among others.

The dynamics of the class, like the materials and the class activities. Many options offered to us when it came time to look for materials, like using Blackboard.

I understand that the dynamics and creativity in the teaching techniques of the professor are reasons for success.

The professor offered the space and time necessary to complete the tasks and improve our education. Good discussions were also had between the professors and students.

It has not been a monotonous class, we were always offering ideas and everyone contributing. She shares many dynamics, it is not the same thing every day.

The best, communication between Professor and students.

Organization: the organization of the class is permitted us to program and extracurricular activities.

The videos she offers us to analyze in class, as in the case of class session videos.

The readings are very appropriate to the discussion in the class. They were very good.

The use of blackboard and all of the text offered to us by the Professor.

She connects with all the students, and instills confidence in us.

The expressions above are congruent with others quoted in the literature (Capella Noya, 2003) in the University of Puerto Rico,¹⁴ where categories such as commitment, justice, passion, academic knowledge, democracy, respect, liberal expression of ideas, and intellectual growth were found as medular for students in college contexts. Much of the categories informed about a professor who prepares for class and is a passionate believer in justice who allows students expressing ideas and thoughts. The counterpart to this, according to students, is the professor who speaks “for herself” and puts barriers and boundaries to reciprocal understanding.

The following is a reflection by a 5th year student of the College of Education:

I've been in classrooms in which the strategies that they teach us have the sole purpose of learning theory. Also, I have been in classrooms or the professors are the only ones who speak imparting all of their knowledge toward the students who are there as passive listeners in the classroom. Likewise, I must say that I have had a great opportunity to be in courses where professors give of themselves openly to put into practice the activities and strategies that we should use with our future students, with ourselves as university students. Maybe, this last out both seems a bit elementary, but how are we supposed to learn to teach our students through strategies that are explained to us if we have not yet had the opportunity to experiment that which we feel when living an enriching learning experience acquired appropriately. These courses became a part of my intrinsic formation as a future teacher. These are the classes that one will not forget, in which the knowledge becomes part of our person in a way that is impossible to separate; and these courses is where we forge true friendships and interpersonal relations that help us in our work as beings in constant development. Without a doubt, it is time that classes leave behind that unilateral process of learning that is so direct and monotonous, and instead become a gratifying experience and

unforgettable experience that marks the life of the student, so that in the future when we are teachers, we might be able to mark the lives of the hundreds of children and youth dad, like us, will hunger for good learning.

In her reflection, the student brings the importance of the course work that demands a commitment and development from both students and professors. Education, from a Freirean perspective becomes an empowerment tool for individuals to reclaim and transform their immediate reality. And so, this fact should propose the articulation of plans and actions from the students, for the students, and by the students with the help and sensibility of their professors.

To Reflect . . . Or the Acts of Rethinking: For What?

To listen or read without reflection is the useless occupation

Confucius, 551–478 BC

I see that in many instances, the reading of texts or documents, visuals or other events are carried out in a mechanical form, with virtually no pause to contemplate its contents. The construction and examination of original ideas or the ideas of others are some of the intentional activities that lead to reflect and rethink. Reviewing, revisiting, refocusing, reformulating, and re-examining are acts that we constantly engage in when a topic is of interest. The creation of spaces and moments for this task is vital: the classroom is an ideal place, but the classroom should be under the control of the collective, not the professor. The construction of conditions for this to occur takes patience, risk, and creativity. All of us, professors and students, come from a tradition of interactive learning, of infusion and transmission. . . not from an epistemological tradition of self-management. Why re-think or re-examine if someone else has already done it?

And so, reflection should occur as a function of a pedagogical autonomy and epistemology that forges knowledge and makes sense. Why reflect? To develop a critical posture toward something that seems true; to develop a critical reading of the world and the word, and to transcend mere theoretical reading of what others said—even if it appears well articulated. We must take risks in order to embark upon a new reading of texts to develop a positive attitude; sensitive and doubtful of the information lead to a thought about how we think, the motivations and emotions related with the task of thinking. Risk taking is important to recognize the ideological location wherein we reside upon examining any determined contents, to develop a sensibility to acknowledge resources and knowledge funds and to understand the power of sociocultural contexts and to be able to deconstruct an idea into new units—creating novel definitions. This then is a relationship between the books' conception of the concept of human development and my conception as reconstructed, and developed over years of offering a course and the exchange of interpretations with students and colleagues.

“The pattern of movement or change that begins at conception and continues through the human life span.” (book definition) vs a reflexive conception : “a continuous process of changes, sequences, moments, stages, among others suffered by all of us living beings come

and they can be seen, appreciated, intuited, they are studied and measured in time and space. These changes and events occur in our biological body, emotional body, spiritual body, cultural body and mental body and have multiple effects on the person as an individual and as a part of the world.”

This is why reflection is the psychotechnic tool for the decomposition of conventional expressions and their demystification (Example: “*children are like sponges*”); two developed educators that nowhere to look...more than what to look for... Remember to look retrospectively in our positions, question them in the present, and project toward the future. We must learn to reconnect with significant emotional events, be they creative or intellectual tasks. At times, I sit in a chair and while drinking coffee, or a cup of good but cheap wine many ideas pass through my head. These occur in my home after attending the children, they occur at the break of dawn as I observe the sunrise from the kitchen in my home. Some are images of events, others words that have marked me, and yet others are pending tasks. Many times this scene occurs in a classroom: children and adolescence seated, looking at the ceiling, thinking. This human disposition directs us toward reflexive activity, not in automatic pilot, rather in the manner of a compass, a forward direction, a lighthouse. It also reminds us that the human world is relational in nature, historically determined.

Yet, reflection must, like a lighthouse, have direction. Without this education becomes pseudo-critical and only functions to domesticate the conscience through a constant disarticulation between a reductionist reading of the specialties in a meeting of the universe within which each specialization is situated. This incapacity to link the reading of the word with the world, will result in weakening democratic institutions and increasing relations of power that characterize the nature of insufficient and hypocritical democracies.

A useful concept to illustrate the lack of knowledge is the “semiliterate specialists”. Defined by Ortega y Gasset as educated ignorants... that are not educated, because formally they ignore all that do not enter into their specialty; but nor they are ignorant because they are ‘scientific’ and ‘know’ very well to use information for their diminutive portion in the universe (in Souza Silva, 2005). Because the “ignorant educated” occupies himself or herself principally with the task for which he or she was prepared, they remain disconnected from other bodies of knowledge and will never be capable of a critical reading of the world. A critical reading of the world implies, according to Freire, “a dynamic comprehension between the sensibility of a less-than-coherent world and a comprehension of a more coherent world.”

From the University to the Fields

He who ceases to learn from the experiences on the street and in the schools is a candidate for extinction. Different from the extinction of animals whose environment we have violated, human beings can become extinct because we lose the necessary

wisdom for our sustainability, that upon which we depend in order to live in coherence and correspondence with our context. Given this premise, sustainability and learning are interdependent and contextual phenomena. To continue living we must continue learning. Without solidarity we are finished as a social group, without the links of correspondence there are no interactions, no debates, there is no opportunity to reinvent one's self.

Our existence and movement through the university are developed from within a fabric of discourses—and counter-discourses—that coexist in a hierarchy of social relations where some become untouchable. And cannot be hypocrites nor ingenious about a power that we do have. We have power: we need to deal with its meaning. Freire said that as teachers we have to acknowledge the power. But that power bestows upon us responsibilities in the form of our political postures, our opinions, our values, and our limitations. The *organized hypocrisy*¹⁵ that emerges historically consists in that the dominant know that the dominated will not reach them, but the illusion of that possibility is constantly faked as possible, desirable, and a naturally imperative occurrence. In the public discourse, the weaker have the *right to develop*, while the stronger have the *moral obligation* to help them develop.

The Stories of Development and Other Insurgencies: The Use of the Word and the Question

What is human development? Is it related to the development of peoples or of knowledge of the earth as our habitat of humanity? Does development mean to undo or reveal something? That undoing or revealing. . . who does it? Why do they do it? For whom is it done? Is it necessary to do it? Where does this task take us? Through the world we are capable of naming the world. This is nothing new. What is new is to consider that to name the world is more than merely ascribing a category or class to some objects, person, place, state of being, among many others. We convert the act of the use of knowledge as a way of positioning ourselves as individuals. For example, when I name a conduct as negative, I am assuming my position as one implicated in the fact that such conduct exists. Has it implicated partly in our own developments from our discourses and acts? Could this course be a good pretext and include space to implicate ourselves in our “discourses” about development (ours and beyond)?

If we assume that we are enveloped (undeveloped) it is because this reality invites us to do something. We see the possibilities of language and how we employ the word. The exercise permits us to see other dimensions of the concepts that we did not see before and refers us two new forms of seeing it that can then be related. That is, we take different avenues to arrive at the same place. But it is no longer the same map, we have reinvented it.

Development is more than “*The pattern of movement or change that begins at conception and continues through the human life span.*” It is an experience repeated every day; it is the collective experience; it is a collective experience of humanity

that we all grow and develop in different parts of the world in different languages and in different religions and cultures; and that human beings are not the protagonists of development, rather development is of all that exists; everything develops and lives. One proposal is that we see development as a constant process of change, sequences, moments, states, and stages, among others, that we as human beings suffer and are visible to us, appreciated, intuited, studied, and are measured throughout time and space. These changes and events occur in our biological bodies, emotional bodies, spiritual bodies, cultural bodies, and mental bodies and they have multiple effects on the individual person and on the person as a part of the world.

Problematization is an attitude that is affective and intellectual that makes use of the question and deconstruction. Our emotional being is the motor of our questioning, of our doubt, and of our thought. Why, who, for what, and how? When we question to know, we are implicated in the process of problematization. For example, we could ask why adolescence is viewed as a conflictive stage. Why does no one think that children can assume positions? Why do I name a conduct as negative or positive? The question with direction is a Freirean maxim of post-formal critique. It is an invitation to critical readings, the assuming of a posture of that questions. This is not just any lazy or light automatic reading. Yet, even matters that could be considered trivial or lazy can have a much more complex reading for the deconstruction of the reading by the thinker yields significant interpretations.

This course we will try to speak in these terms, in questions. We will explore the theories and their creators with both a very critical and very human lens. Who will read about the lives of the theorists and their ideas. And those persons that have developed some ideas of the classical theories and have taken these to another level we too will discuss them with the disposition of researchers, that doubt and question. As a professor, I will try to be more a guide and support and less directive. Though I must confess that being able to share with others what I know and what I read fascinates me. On the other hand, that is part of my role as an academic; but I recognize that I recognize myself as one that has power and that the same power can go when my aspiration of being less direct and more inspirational. This is why I invite students, with a sense of urgency, to work with great commitment in the course; to assume the course will be as something common to our shared responsibilities.

Lessons Learned in the Sewing Process

Since we should learn the most from our mistakes and successes it is then imperative to move into creations, improvisations, intended and calculated risks, with much documentation. Planning is an act of calibrating and reviewing what kinds of tools you have to work with, timing for using them, and context. A core dimension here is to rethink and evaluate the result of activities on behalf of the classroom climate, students' commitment with their ideas and projects, and its transference into other life situations.

What I have learned about the social and dialectical constructivist approach is that our work is the cultural activity that motors our thoughts and attitudes into ideas, concepts, artifacts, and tools, among others. Our work in the classroom has the capacity to create networks because it touches people who want to touch other people. These human nets are in constant e-motion in time and space forming what we know as a cultural and historical individual. Pedagogy in *e-motion* celebrates and respects those attributes and uses them to sew an authentic learning context, without fragmenting it. I will connect this conceptualization with Freire and other critical writers' theoretical positions. I think that education is a process inherent in our lives; if meaningful, we will use it for life.

The human experience as a *pedagogy of living* cannot be fragmented into topics without any relation among them; the same way we do not live fragmenting ourselves. In order to discover, to invent, to produce, and to reflect we must design "ecologically," taking into account those texts that we encourage our students to make from their discourses and the information that they gather as they read and discuss educational psychology literature. The external text is a reference for all. The ideas posed by the literature are questioned, embraced, celebrated, or critiqued; all are valid as they motivate and generate our discussions and postures. It is here where subjectivity and objectivity provide occasion for the crossover that I'm proposing, promoting intuitive reasoning, practical intelligence, and popular wisdom as means to the discussion, analysis, questioning, and to simply make sense.

I believe, as Freire pointed out, that knowledge is an action of movement. . .you going with others, from one place to another, with pedagogical goals in mind and also a lot of hope, elaborating ideas, feelings, forms, drawings, books, stories, and so on. What we think and call "objective" was something subjective that reached some kind of maturation when we were capable of relating, corresponding, and harmonizing between what we think and the evidence we can find in our work as educators. Therefore, we teachers are cultural workers.

The practices that I share in this writing are original and permit me to explore the minute corners of pedagogical consciousness in practice and putting into action the concepts of problematization, scaffolding, mediation, mentoring, collaboration, and academic collective life. I value the zones of development of all students; the reason for challenging their potential to read the world within the word, using critical elements and discourses, performing action research to explore and question their personal hypotheses, and to reflect upon their own development and learning. I also use CITs as a means to expand time and spaces frontiers, as well as to enhance expressions, questions, and arguments and to develop organized thinking. The results are always tentative given that the reality of university classrooms is never lineal. The maps of a shared livelihood are constantly being drawn, but the tentative discoveries that have of my practices and my reflections have demonstrated that they are good compasses for the observation of the many diverse ways of learning.

Notes

1. *Mundillo* is a very delicate Puerto Rican lace, very elaborated that is made of fine threads worked on a small loom.
2. Radical love is a term used by Paulo Freire in some of his books.
3. This is a group of Christian youth at the University of Puerto Rico which has been active for 20 years.
4. The Recreative and Cultural Project (RCP) was a consequence of the Pan American Sports Games celebrated in Puerto Rico during the summer of 1979, when the Educational Department had the difficult challenge of opening and ending the Games with official artistic performances. Each teacher had one or more groups of students in Dance (2,500 students, or 25%), Music (1,200 students, or 12%), Rhythmic Exercise (2,000 students, or 20%), and Mosaic and Murals (4,300 students, or 43%). The Recreative and Cultural Project (RCP) (Fronteras (1992, in Negrón, 1996)) was created in accordance with Law 97-35 (ECIA), under Chapter II, Part C, which gives an opportunity for students to develop and increase their skills in Fine Arts, such as dance, instrumental music, and singing.
5. The US Ramey Military Base was established in Aguadilla, Puerto Rico, as part of the military power and domination over this country. From 1970s was used by the Department of Education as a camp site for immersion workshops.
6. The concept is discussed in [Chap. 3](#).
7. This is a Joe Kincheloe's concept of "critical postmodernism" discussed widely on his books since the 1990s.
8. The Coquí dorado (Golden Coquí or *Eleutherodactylus jasper*) is an endemic specie of Puerto Rico which was declared extinct by expert herpetologist Dr. Rafael Juglar.
9. Apply to Puerto Rico due to the fact of being a colony or nonincorporated territory of the United States.
10. Gestalt is German concept to signify "put before the eyes, exposed to the glances" o "yor Augen gestellt." In modern times *Gestaltung* could be translated as "stellen to shape" (see Sinay and Blasberg, 2000).
11. Responses from students were gathered through a virtual forum in a class as part of an Action Research, with the help of Ms. Basilia Encarnación (Ph.D. since 2008), who was my research assistant. The research was funded by the University of Puerto Rico.
12. Notes were gathered in a summary by the group of students, as they wrote them.
13. The questionnaire designed by the Assessment Office is administrated to the students only; the professor cannot be in the room. The results are revealed to the professor until the next semester.
14. This study was conducted in the University of Puerto Rico, Arecibo Campus.
15. This is a José de Souza Silva's (2005) expression, in his paper Aprender inventando desde "lo local" o perecer imitando desde "lo global."

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Chapter 5

Ideas in Motion Within a Classroom in *E-motion*: Creating Environments for Meaningful Projects

Let's go to the sea to contemplate the waves and the sunset. Maybe you could teach me to swim or to fish... But while you teach me to fish or to swim, what is it that you want me to learn?: to simply swim or to fish, or how, why and for what reason are you teaching me to swim or to fish? Likewise, it could be that you want me to learn to teach to swim or to fish.¹

A. Labarrere, 2009, p. 2

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In the last chapter I shared memorable moments that described, from my own ideological location, a format for the weaving of shared meaning in the classroom. Notwithstanding, we must question “the authority of experience” because without such fundamental critique we fall prey to pure ingeniousness. We know that experience can inform how we know what we know, but what is really meaningful is that which results from the passion of remembrance (hooks, 1994). Remembrance stands for a pure particular location of memory that resides close to emotions. Emotions call for passion and engagement of the analytical way of knowing. When it comes to experiences in the classroom, the whole picture of a specific location and context

requires diverse ways of thinking and approaching the experience, endeavoring to put young university students in positions that they would not imagine positive, as if you are analyzing an artist's masterpiece from different positions.

The wheel that it takes to move the spirit of another is proportional to the psycho-emotional energy that is assigned to the action and during reflection. The quote from the Chilean professor Alberto Labarrere captured me because it reflects the complexity of learning and of human development, while at the same time revealing the mediated intentionality of he or she that invites the learning. To engage in a genuine pedagogical experience we professors need to be authentic with our students. The kind of pedagogy that it invites a transformation recognizes the work must be done at the base level, work that requires feelings, passion, and reason: all of which are articulated and synchronized with the students with whom we may have great generational differences. Mediation is, from the critical perspective of Labarrere, an intent to contextualize that Vygotskian concept, a zone that progressively more rotten as its reach, that is negotiated and constantly pulsating. The learner is capable of questioning the educator with respect to his or her intentions: ". . . so what do you want me to learn: to swim or simply fish, or how and why?" We cannot mediate without the consent of the other, even when we have the power in the classroom. That power is to be expended in the time and space needed for reflection, conversations, and approaches; in order to avoid the temptation of taking them all on the same track of the massification of education as if it were all a matter akin to assembly-line work, as if it were a factory of "professionals." And so the great challenge in the universities is to mediate in a critical matter with our students, knowing that we have a "sea" of generational differences—some more than others—and in this effort, mediate within ourselves in order to learn the way. When I speak of a "sea" I am reverting or reminding myself of that beautiful quotes by Labarrere, and also in me as an educator. When I began to teach I was 27 years old and I felt very close to my students generationally; maybe their sister. Today I am 46 and I could be their mother, and that space of time brings to my consideration differences in many areas—social, technological, aspirational, cultural, and political. Notwithstanding, I would not change the privileged position that I occupy that allows me to reach out to many young adults—at least 75 per semester—that inspires me and challenges me and permits me to maintain a balance and sensibility of the generational differences.

Because of this, the creation of spaces where we invite one another to mutual transformational action—theirs and mine—calls for (sentipensante) *sense-thinking*. Precisely, the term eloquently reveals the necessary fusion that gives meaning to human effort in the accompaniment of another, to help them to educate themselves. It is this term which was utilized by Eduardo Galeano, and reinvigorated by Laura Rendón, in her presentation on diversity and learning in higher education titled "Envisioning the Next Generation of Diversity Work: Core Agreements and Correspondences," offered in 2006 before the Association of American Colleges and Universities. Rendón refers to the new pedagogy she envisions as *sentipensante*, or "sensing/thinking": a "multi-human" approach that "unites what I call the poetry of teaching and learning with the rationality of teaching and learning." This pedagogy, as Rendón imagines it, attends not only to our entire selves but also to

all people; it excludes no one and nurtures all strengths, regardless of historical privilege (in *Diversity Digest* (2007)). This proposal, as in the case of pedagogy in (e)motion, challenges the bifurcation between affects and reason, between thinking and feeling, in order to broaden the possibilities of arriving at sensible and sensitive understanding. In addition, we are encouraged to see learning and teaching from a more complex paradigm—complexity paradigm—instead of the traditional lineal paradigm.

When we speak of broadening possibilities we must always consider the political challenges that this brings to the taking of positions and decisions made, of the use of power, of the use of language, among others. As we have been saying, transformative action may be impeded not only by intellectual structures but by sociopolitical structures as well. The political structures imposed obstacles that we must decipher and “read” critically because they come in many forms and dimensions: religious dimensions, economic and social dimensions, media literacy and mass media information, among others. And yet, the knowledge that we must struggle with these barriers will not impede our struggle against them as we generate new and hopeful forms of knowing. How many words do we need to name hope? All those that exist and those we can invent. Pedagogy in (e)motion is an attitude needed to move and to reinvent knowledge with a critical, sensible, and political vision. Emotions are basic for the formulation of plans of action and decision-making processes, and they stretch our cognitive limits. Chilean philosopher Humberto Maturana (2002) suggests that we as teachers must learn to educate our capacity to reflect and at the same time relate with our students as human beings, and subjects of knowledge, to correct mutual mistakes (in the sense of correcting mutual errors and a comprehension that we are all co-creators of the educational experience). The strength of being connected with our emotions, and with our feelings is that we give of ourselves that what we have to be honest and genuine. The notion of being connected allows us to “see,” as in the famous fable titled *Seven Blind Mice* (version by Ed Young²), beyond the small and isolated truths. It allows for the visualization of the complexity of pedagogical practices committed to contextualized problematization. In that context—in which we are all present as actors—reality is reformulated and we are compelled to re-examine and reinvent it. When one of the blind mice takes the initiative to explore all of the dimensions of the unknown reality or contradiction, there emerges as the realization that in the “allness” or “wholeness” there reside many of the answers to that which at first glance seems apparently unknown or contradictory; and that contradiction, from a more holistic position seems to no longer confuse but rather complement the knowledge that came from seeing only the parts, from recognizing or perceiving only fragments. Another interpretation for the story of the *Seven Blind Mice* is the consideration of seven different stories, each of one with its unique plot and imagery.

To learn is a practice, as expressed by my Cuban-Puerto Rican colleague, Pedro Subirats but that practice must be nourished. Nourishing the exploration and the risk was, understandably, in the preceding table, like a pressure valve that liberated doubt and curiosity. Conventional knowledge values abstract theory and degrades action, because in the search for “the truth” the method with which it is made effective is

forgotten (Subirats, 2007). Conventional knowledge does not breathe life, does not motivate, does not inspire because the individual's ontological necessity to look for creative and dynamic meanings, yet holding values in context. Knowledge from the perspective of the lineal box and tradition needs to be expressed in exact descriptions; it presents knowledge as a finished product that students and teachers alike must accept, instead of understanding it as a process of the incorporation of new skills and readings, interpretations in which students and educators must participate fully in a free exchange of ideas. In this way we avoid falling into the trap of remaining immersed in the "knowing-that" (information), to free ourselves in the knowing-how (power). In an education that deposits information or rewards those who retains more information, the student will always remain very occupied filling her/himself with data rather than occupying her/himself with interpretation, understanding, and questioning that data. In such situation, the effort of the professor it's also reduce the matter of simply assigning grades and passing on to the next group. The result is a mass production of teachers, a waste of talents, and the risk of fading or being "sold" in the market of higher education.

As a university educator, I feel the need to shape and transform plans and activities on a biweekly basis, taking calculated risks and decisions based on the contextual demands of the university. I also consult with my students in order to create a more collective workshop environment, not a dry classroom. I also sense a great inclination to examine the text that we work within the classroom—primary sources, stories, biographies, theoretical articles, research, and others—from the moment of induction, without bulldozing the students with complicated readings, instead accompanying them, but always presenting intellectual challenges that are indispensable to the process. In this sense my pedagogy has an Hostosian method—taken from the Puerto Rican philosopher and sociologist Eugenio María de Hostos, who posited that when one initiates a novel or new understanding menu order of knowledge, we must avoid books and begin according to our sensitive and intuitive capabilities, working these ideas and related ideas with the lives and experiences of our students—from that which is known to that which will be known. In the last chapter I described the experience of writing letters with themes related to learning and development and the results that I had with the students. Given this, my pedagogical practice—the artistic part of the process of teaching—is accompanied by what Hostos called, in volume VI of *Ciencia de la pedagogía* (en López & Quiles, 1991), the science of pedagogy, that he summarized as a very dialectical methodology that traveled from intuition, as a mechanism and human approach to reality, then to induction, passing through reflexive deduction, and then to systematization. With a metaphor this "concentric" method can be visualized as the concentric circles or ripples produced by an object when thrown into a liquid; a very graphic way of visualizing how appropriate questions and situations emerge within one another awaiting study and reflection.

Spontaneity: an option to transform, step-by-step, the educational experience through opened and collective discussions. For me, this was the success of this course.

Student–teacher

E-emotional Reflections of Pedagogical Processes

Teaching implies critical thought with focus; it can close the dynamic movement and dialectic between doing and thinking about how to do. In this way, it would be incomplete to think about what we do and how we do it without understanding the historical, political, and circumstantial processes in which knowing and doing are constructed. Freire and Vygotsky, in their constructive and critical dialectic, have inspired me to search the limits which the borders and to transgress in order to avoid an intellectual comfort zone of conformity. Figure 5.1 presents the *Dialectic challenge when we conceive pedagogy in (e)motion*: constantly moving ourselves in order to reach more questions, issues, inconformity to work upon. Every activity in my courses must invite everyone into this movement.

What I have learned about the social and dialectic constructivist and post-modernist views is that our work is the cultural activity—never neutral, always political—which drives our thoughts and attitudes into ideas, concepts, artifacts, tools, among others. Movement is demanded from reflection to analysis to action and so on. It is also important to point out that reality must be read in different texts because it is multidimensional and multisubjective, and that accounts for a different or more complex reading as we move on. This statement leads to a critical pedagogical practice and approaches that consider narratives, live experiences, case studies, and other nontraditional expressions as authentic material in the generation of knowledge. Our work has the capacity to create networks because it reaches people who want to reach out to other people. These human nets are in constant *e-motion* in time and space forming what we know as a cultural and historical being. Pedagogy in *e-motion* thus celebrates and respects those attributes and uses them to weave an authentic and engaging learning context that we must reinvent.

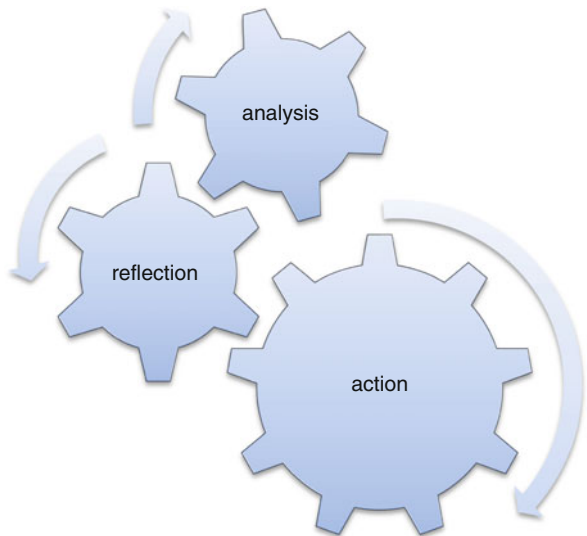


Fig. 5.1 A representation of the dialectic challenge to conceive a pedagogy in (e)motion. See the movement between action, reflection, and analysis

Pedagogical practice is more a live process than a concept. I used to challenge “objectivity” or the state of mind where, with emotional detachment, one inspects concepts and reports findings as the measurement of excellence or rigor in research. This is not by any means a rejection of good measurement or estimates in educational research. Instead I measure excellence by interrogating myself, examining my analysis and whether we have contributed to creating the conditions for democratic practices and the freedom to think, to interpret and come up with multiple meanings. The educator is like an institutional structure, a mark of his or her history, that creates and assumes positions, and as such it needs to pause and look for different ways of explaining because the development and learning processes are driven by multidimensional paths. Ethics are formed and reformed by the actions and decisions of educators. In order for us to create our own formulations it is necessary to feel that education frees us, that we need not remain boxed-in by time nor space that can serve to oppress and limit the possibilities of work and change. It is here that educators can understand that being authorities we produce authority and that can oppress us, and that authoritarianism does not let creativity flow nor allow for the necessary emotions in order for us to relate critically and affectively with our students. A critical and sensible educator needs to understand knowledge as a relational and collective act. Given this, the pressure that we are under can be shared, because education is not a solitary act, it would be like carrying an unbearable weight and arriving nowhere. In the process of teaching we conjugate the relationship, the ontological necessity of the being merges with the socio-genetic necessity to progress and evolve.

Knowledge is constructed in a person–world relationship, relations of transformation, and relations that are perfected in the critical problematization of these same relationships (Sirley dos Santos, 2006). Problematizing and dialogical education constructed in relation to the other is defiant, parting from situations that are always problem posing or situations that appear immutable. It is not merely an act of narration, depositing, transferring, or transmitting information, it is an act of interpreting the sensory and perceptual experience. It is founded upon creativity, stimulating reflection-action over a reality that is multifaceted. It is important that all ideas of our learning are problematized—the myths, the arts, the sciences, both culture and history. By doing so the limitations of these are revealed and so their possibilities. The same happens when students and professors are freed from the constraints of a Box that presupposes “knowledge.” The following Freirean idea, cited by his student Maria Sirley dos Santos could be considered a tongue twister with respect to knowing:

To educate and to know how to educate in the practice of freedom is the task of those that know they know little, that is why they know that they know something and can learn to know more, in a dialogue with those that almost always think that they know nothing, so that these, transforming that they know nothing into knowing little pass on to know more. (in Sirley dos Santos, 2006).

This effort is not possible without a constant dialogue that can be transformed into a question and reflection that must be turned inward toward ourselves and the

work we do. No one frees anyone, but no one is freed alone either. It is as much an interpersonal as it is an intrapersonal task, always onto planes that inform one another. That is to say, it is not possible to confront the transformation of oneself without the mediation of another in the dialectic created through cultural action (Gredler & Shields, 2008). Because everything that we do becomes in one form or another a product-process of the culture and in that way it transforms us and others. No one teaches another everything, human beings are educated and freed in communion (Freire, 1997), and they must be respected equally in terms of their rights, even amidst the differences between one another. This is why I emphasize in my pedagogical practice being expressive, whether qualitative informs the quantitative—the paradigm of the pseudoscientific—and it is completed and described with the luxury of shared details and forms. To emphasize these qualities in our pedagogical activity is to make our work artful wisely combining art and science as sisters in the culture of humanity. By the same token, bell hooks (1994) affirms that teaching is a performative act. And I have to agree with her, given that it has been my own experience in the classroom and other pedagogical settings. Performance is that aspect of our work that offers the space for change, invention, improvisation, and even good and thoughtful planning. To embrace the formative aspect of teaching it means that we are compelled to engage many and diverse audiences to consider ideas, issues, and proposals of reciprocity. We need each other; we need to resist the enchantment of the lights and the special effects. In other words, our job is not to amaze others senses, but to shake their senses and to move not to entertain in a banking-like fashion. A delicate balance must be struck between a performance that engages and one that shadows. What is education if not the art of making movement so others can engage at our invitation to participate and to be?

A Kaleidoscope: Students, Teacher, and Content Exploring Imagination

Why does one write if not to unite the parts?

From the moment we enter school or the church, education cuts us into pieces, it teaches us to divorce reason from the heart and the soul from the body.

Eduardo Galeano, *El libro de los abrazos*, 1989
(translation by author)

I agree with Galeano when he denounces the pedagogy which I call a pedagogy of indifference. This is precisely why we write, in order to avoid being chopped into pieces and invited; instead to maintain alive the possibility of constructing bridges, shattering frontiers, and to paint histories that unify and celebrate will. This is why a classroom for life must be a kaleidoscope of possibilities that does not permit for the division between thought and feeling. Elements like space, time, content, materials, and individuals enter into a synergy in order to bring to life functions that relate to one another and that share common objectives. We do not come into a classroom to present ourselves to our students with our goals and objectives outlined in a syllabus

or a course catalog. Instead we come into the classroom with a proposal in our hands, to be negotiated and outlined by everyone. In order for this to happen we need the determination, but does it have much to say and learn at the same time. With respect to this I speak of myself as an eternal student and my student-teachers, which choose me and confide in my pedagogy and from whom I have received many lessons. In order to have a classroom where all these ingredients mix well we need energy. A common and collaborative pedagogical guiding star because we are all united in our diversity.

Ideas in motion (Fig. 5.2) is a repertoire of strategies and resources that I implemented to create emotions and to move myself and students to a level of hard work with pleasure. I have employed, for example, the use of interactive portfolios since 2001, which is a course potpourri of what students identify and present as the best and the worst of the course, their selected works based on their own criteria and metaphors about their own development, personal stories, and aspirations. This has been an integrated and interesting use of some technologies, creative thinking, and the organization and assessment of the students themselves in a task that is both enjoyed and challenging. All of the activities and strategies are founded on the use of intuition, induction, and deductive thought. I do not use tax to enslave the minds of my students nor my own, instead to challenge, to stimulate and re-create, and to attend to the first that they have to open the windows of their lives and the lives of the

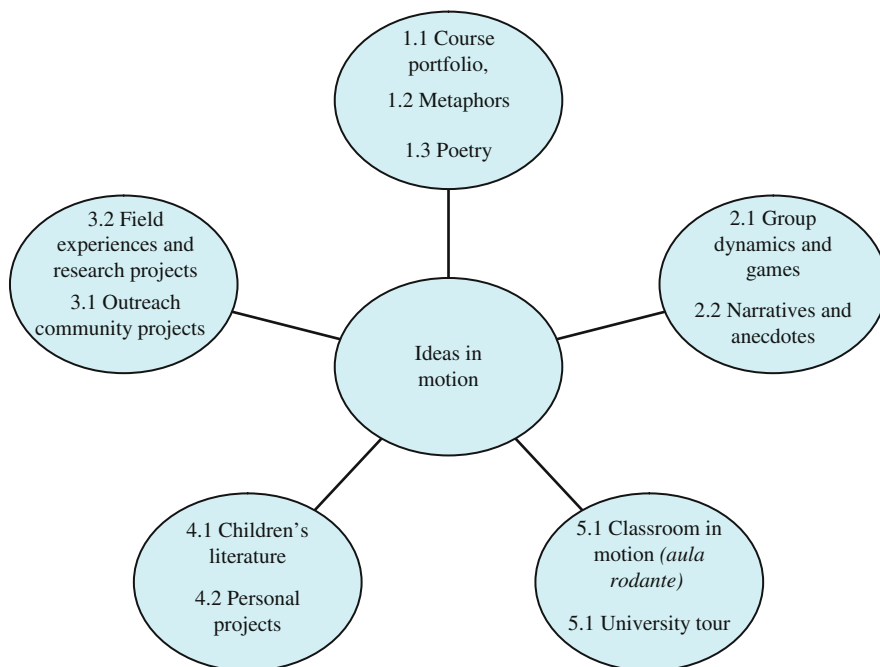


Fig. 5.2 Ideas in motion for a sensible learning

thinkers and researchers that have made literature, because from the critical readings we become theorists of our own reality. As expressed by López and Quiles in their analysis of Hostos' work: "the tax should be the guides to a freedom of the mind; text that instead of separating the student from life, direct them toward an observation and research of realities; text that stimulate intellectual activity" (1991, p. 36).

The student portfolio is a personal collection, forged of the collective effort in the classroom, of reflections and works produced by the student throughout the course of the class and his or her academic life representing him/her in relation to his or her learning, academic productivity, and formation (Zambrana-Ortiz, 2006). Using the question as a pivot point, we all embark upon a constant revision floor positions with a disposition that the students themselves have called "stimulating and challenging." In this portfolio we see represented the product of the reflections, revisited and revised and critically evaluated via they themselves; a sample of "their metaphor" of development and fragments of a personal and impacting anecdote that allows them to connect their own development with the object of study.

My Best Project Is to Let Them Think About Themselves with Hope

My development as a person. . . I consider it a privilege to be a student and this is a stage in my life that I expect to fully enjoy and take advantage of.

As a son and I have analyzed myself the time and have realized that to be a son is easy; the ship is being apparent. Just ask my mom or dad.

As one part of a relationship with another person. . . What a trip! Women are not to be necessarily understood, are to be loved. But I'm still trying to understand certain things.

As a member of a nation I feel the same commitment that I would have felt if I had been born in China or Africa.

As a member of my community I feel that I did all I could to make sure that the path in front of my house was paved. For years I had resigned myself to living in front of an unpaved and old path. One can struggle toward change.

As a citizen of the world: gain consciousness of that which happens around us and contribute in a way that for us is possible.

This is part of a male student teacher's³ portfolio in the course Human Growth and Development. I enjoyed the colloquial form of the student, or use of the riveting experience. This is one of the accomplishments of our portfolio, the ability to gravitate between the informal, the formal, and the personal grace and sensitivity. With no pretensions, the student was able to locate himself honestly, in a light and refreshing manner. The strong language is for me a dimension of critical emotional importance, while picturesque and colorful. In the same way students had to analyze practices and locate them with their students assuming risk and its potentials. Our portfolio project used to include reflections of how students think of themselves as persons in the diverse contexts of their development, and at the same time what defines them; they had to reflect on development and learning through the use of metaphors, anecdotes, and activities related to the course; they had to evaluate their execution and contribution to the course. They were asked to debate about course's

challenges, inconveniences, and assertions, and they had to reflect on the contents of most importance to them.

The scheme in Fig. 5.3 attempted to represent the idea of the reflective and authentic that the experiences gathered. The structure that I give in illustration (Fig. 5.3) helps them to focus and inspire themselves in relation to the course. The portfolio of the course is a work in the formation of reflexive activity as a tool for reflection and at the same time as the product that allows them to critical opportunity in the course to make changes and proposals. The portfolio is an instrument or tool that facilitates reflection with respect to the course becoming a space from which the students could think and rethink their learning experience, developed their own educational philosophies of life, evaluate the content and activities of the courts, the use of technologies and where they position themselves with respect to research and the psychology and development of learning in Puerto Rico. The presentation of their evidence evolved from presenting samples of work. Assessment criteria was developed and aligned to the students' pace. In fact, this became effective way to promote the writing and reflection I developed for my educational psychology course.

Students found this activity very convenient as a way of "disclosing" or revealing with great honesty and openness a dialogue on their work and performances.

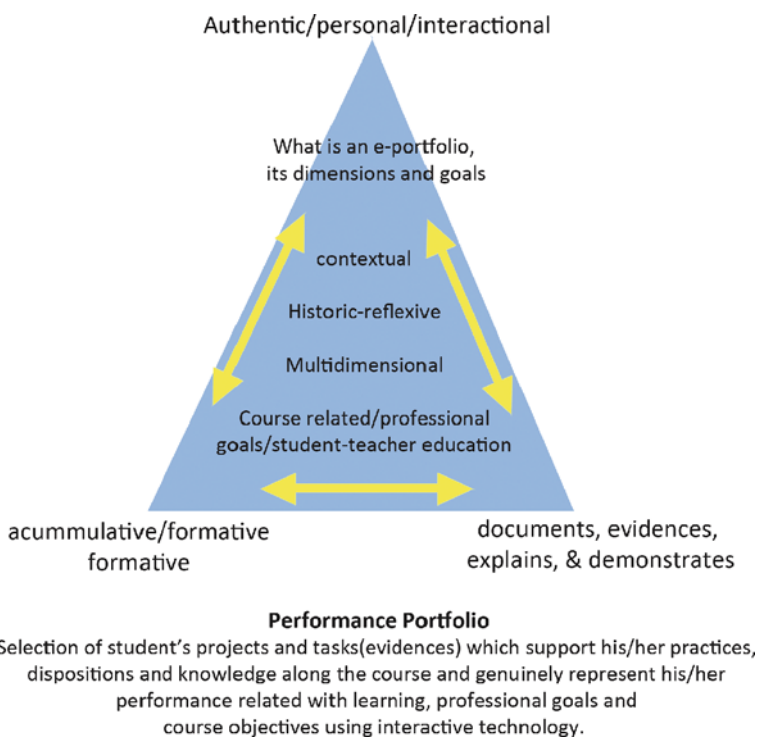


Fig. 5.3 Conceptual scheme of the portfolio for the course, growth and human development

The diagram⁴ shown in the next page, reflects my intention to make the activity a complex, yet relational and meaningful for them.

I have often expressed, “there is no such thing as a mistaken portfolio; there are portfolios that more or less inform; they are simply a reflection of you.” To this point no student has failed in completing her portfolio for the course in an agile and interactive way, even when it is a task that bears much weight in the course. The following is a sample of some reflections, opinions, assessments, and poetry by the students about their different tasks:

The experience that most helped me understand children and young people was the discussion of personal anecdotes . . . and I confess that it should improve in expressing my own experiences, I am a little shy . . . the activity that challenged me the most were the field work.

The Conceptual map was the more challenging work, it required mental and unique organization. This made me analyse and draw all important information. I had to wrk hard but I loved it, because It forced me to do synthesis that some time ago did not “used”. In the Informed Opinion could do better; didn’t put all the effort, or at least not the same way as in the other work. I think that the search for information was little and analysis was more shallow.

The cooperative tests: I never thought that in a course like this. . .the reviews would be this way. It is Perfect to share ideas with your classmates, many times had contrary ideas that led us to long debates requiring knowledge and analysis of the topic. We defended our point of view and listened to others to see if he had validity argument. There was where we knew that a true teaching of human development was taking place.

Listening to my peers and talking about my experiences I understood many theories and explanations of the profesor, which first instance not caught. I think that it was a nice way of looking at development in our own lives, the experience of gathering to listen to us, understanding and supporting was grandiose and I would repeat this in other courses.

My motivation for this course were the very different ways in which we were going to be evaluated. This course made us see that there are many ways in which knowledge of the student can be measured. This motivated me to study more.

I was struck by Paulo Freire, who recommends that teaching becomes a reflection on lessons learned; I also liked that discusses about awareness of teachers of what they are willing to teach and learn from students.

In order to fulfill the development of self-awareness, the sense of interconnectness with others, and a relationship between students’ personal tasks in their complete landscape, we must address live and (e)motional learning contexts, as Palmer (1998) states, to attend to the spiritual dimension of young adults, to recognize that learning is part of honoring the learner as an active subject. Being a learning subject implies an attitude, a disposition, and an empowerment not only to demonstrate competences for arguing, questioning, and reflecting but also to feel comfortable with conflict. When students can see each other as important contributors of knowledge production they also discover their strength and the value of their experience. Parker Palmer said, in an interview (in Hatton, 2005, p. 73), that his most significant learning experience was his “journey with clinical depression” because it forced him to gain more self-knowledge for healing purposes, hence “living divided no more” has been a major theme in his academic and personal work. In spite of the artificial separation of the intellect and the emotions, we as critical

educators must prove the interweaving of the human thread. In Fig. 5.4 you will find the questions that provided the motivation for the students' reflections in their portfolios. The following quote is from a male student about his reflection as a college student:

My first year of College changed my vision about the University, I wouldn't imagine me studying only be a professional but providing me with different tools to be a better human being and help my society. It is in the University where I understood, that the process cannot be confined to taught by other educators, we must search and inquire more about the studied and finally, practice it.

I. Introduction

Brief reflection, thought, song or poem fragment, remember to cite the source or the author.

II. My philosophy of life

- ❖ Why am I studying a career in the university?
- ❖ What does the teaching and learning process mean to me?
- ❖ What elements have been crucial in my development as a person?
- ❖ What is my vision of what higher education should be like in Puerto Rico for the preparation of professionals?
- ❖ What legacy do I wish to leave for my descendants?
- ❖ What would I like to leave for other generations in my profession?

III. On the process of learning about human development

- ❖ My development as a person is: (at the present)
 - As a student
 - As a son or daughter
 - As a mother or father (should that be the case)
 - As a partner of another person
 - As a member of a community
 - As a member of a nation
 - As a citizen of the world

IV. Human development: My metaphors

I recommend that you do an exercise of intuition and introspection in order to generate ideas that seemed to you relevant to human development or that evoke in you the process of growth and development as a person. Example: The growth of a tree; the evolution of an idea; or an invention...

- ❖ To sustain your metaphor you may cite theorists from the text
- ❖ You should narrate a personal anecdote from whatever stage of development and describe it multidimensionally
- ❖ What currents of thought and/or theories have impacted me and why (thinkers, philosophers, or theorists of psychology)

V. The validity and importance of theories in the study of human development in Puerto Rico

- ❖ Which of those studied do you think will help understand the development of Puerto Ricans and why ?

VI. Course experiences and assessment

- ❖ Brief accounts of three course activities or tasks, the most attractive and motivational for you, or those that you found most difficult and challenging. Explain.
 - Reading stories
 - Games (demonstrations)
 - School visits
 - Informational student capsules
 - Workshops at schools
 - Community projects
 - Visit to the university pediatric hospital
 - Cooperative test in the classroom
 - Professor's presentations for topic lectures
 - Discussion of tests
 - Discussion of personal anecdotes

Fig. 5.4 The content of the outlined questions to guide the portfolio's journey

- Videos and didactic materials of the text
- Virtual communication with professors and classmates
- Virtual group activity
- Online forums
- Access to materials on blackboard (Bb)
- Research work
- Electronic portfolios
- Workshops on bibliographic searches
- Resource visitations
- Problem-based learning

❖ **Brief accounts of the research experience**

- On the way it was done (individual, in pairs, or group). Was it positive, enriching or laborious, difficult, and conflictive, and why.
- On the experience of researching information outside of the classroom
- On what you did not know and learn
- On what you would have done better or different

VII. Field activities and experiences of the course (including the experiences of assessment): One student evaluation. Draw two links here with two of those chosen from the previous list.

- ❖ What experience of I like the most?
- ❖ Which one has helped me most understand children and youth?
- ❖ Which one would be repeated in another class or in my practice?
- ❖ In which one should I improve?
- ❖ Which one did I enjoy the most?
- ❖ Experiences or activities that most challenge me
- ❖ What motivated me to study in the course?
- ❖ In which one do I demonstrate my greatest learning and development?

VIII. In what way am I different today from yesterday?

- ❖ The impact of the course content on my life
- ❖ My participation and contribution to the class
- ❖ Discrepancy in my vision of human development
- ❖ Explain a contribution that you would like to make or that others may to the further development of Puerto Ricans
- ❖ An area of development where more research in Puerto Rico and why needs to be done and

Fig. 5.4 (continued)

I think the work that most demonstrates my learning in this course, is this one: the portfolio. I considered it this way because it is a combination of all my experiences in the course, that together contributed to the knowledge that I have now regarding human development.

My concept of the portfolio prepared many students to think critically about the university's aspiration and vision. It also raised many issues about technology, private- or public-domain platforms, and the collection of aggregated data to be used institutionally. During those years the faculty discussed the use of more powerful technological sources to gather student's opinions and insights about their learning journey in our teacher preparation program. Those issues are still alive, but I can say that many students felt empowered by using a collection of their own pieces of work that became inspirational and fun to do, while being technologically challenged. Today students are more technologically embedded. They are involved in many social networks and social projects than other student generations. My 10-year-old daughter knows more about my laptop features and is more a risk taker with the technology than I do; my 2-year-old son plays with the cellular phone sounds with ease.

Poetry Works for Reflection

...Free-girls, lover-boys, children that show feeling and truth; walking-boys, walking-girls...youth, older... always boys and girls

n Zambrana 1996

Poetry, as a vehicle of expression for my students and myself, has been very stimulating, a kind of element of surprise for many is that I find the university classroom a cold place. The warmth generated by poetry and its many expressions are the combustible matter that lightens up the emotions for broad expression, genuine and creative among many students and educators. Poetry has been a reflection of human expression since time immemorial. Poets find the wisdom within their souls to act with grace as they record the events that transform their lives, and by their writing, give all of us the gift of inspiration. How many of us have shared the joy of a child's birth with a card containing a few lines of verse, or wept with a grieving family as a poem is read at the funeral? I remember the poems my grandmother used to write in all our birthday cards (ten grandchildren). I know I took from her that hint of uniqueness since I would write poetry quite often. In a sense, poetry liberates my thoughts to connect them with my emotions, which is the case for me when I feel depressed and lonely; when I am excited and motivated, when I do not know how to express in words what my soul is feeling. Poetry is value for creativity. As we experience poetry in its highest forms, we realize that others have felt the emotions and urges that we feel, and with the knowledge that we are not alone in our feelings, we gain confidence and poise to meet our challenges head-on.

What makes poetry so universal is that anyone anywhere can be a poet. You do not have to be a scholar to enjoy and receive the vitality of poetry. A poet simply strives to capture in words the essence of the human condition as he or she experiences it, the tangible form of pure spirit. A young child full of bright-eyed wonder can write as moving a poem on what it means to be alive as her grandmother who reminisces about days gone by. The businessman and student alike can understand the feelings expressed by a farmer who witnesses and records the transpiring awe of watching his crops grow through the wet spring earth. Poetry knows only the boundaries of the human soul. I recall the conversations through poetry that I developed with graduate students from the Graduate College of Education at Harvard University and the support of Dr. Eileen de los Reyes, who was a professor at that time. The topics discussed were Paulo Freires's life, critical pedagogy, solidarity in a community of learners, the creative process, and the political status of Puerto Rico, which was raised in our discussions given the case of Dr. Solís Jordán,⁵ an independentist professor who was arrested during those days in San Juan. Interestingly, it was this moment that helped us to understand Freire's pedagogy and many of his postulates with respect to political clarity in the relationship between politics and education.

Some believe that what keeps most of us from writing a moving poem is the effort it takes to craft words so that the emotions are expressed as we feel them. Some lucky poets find the exact words the first time, but most poets labor intensely to create a gift that others can find meaningful. I think that poetry can be what you

feel and think of your present or your past, brought from your inner self, rhyme or no rhyme. While poetry is universal in its ability to transcend time and place, part of its lure to us as individuals lie in its varied “music”—the rhythm each poem has when read. When a poem is written, a rhythm develops which lends beauty and augments meaning. Think of a poem you’ve heard at a wedding. Most sound light and airy in celebration of the beauty of love. In contrast, a poem commemorating the passing of a hero often is somber and moves slowly and meditatively as it is read. The writer creates a poem by manipulating words just as musician uses musical notes to create not only the right meaning, but also the right sound to fully convey the emotion. Any emotion and feeling can find its way in poetry. Ideas are both thoughts and soul of whoever has them. The movement of our ideas also implies our movement with them. The ideas must be in constant change and constant life. The ethical principles that sustain the ideas are enriched even if not negotiated. This broadens the spaces and experiences for university students freeing them and the options available for research and creation.

I remember I wrote a poem to denounce and at the same time call attention to the rescuing of that idea and I titled it “La Grande Niñez” (The Big Childhood). This was a look into the world of a child’s as she observed the world and its political, moral, and spiritual dimensions; that also became a great challenge when I wrote it, having just parted from a course that I taught on human development where we had discussed some of the negative and unnerving kindergarten experiences of my students. By titling it “Grande” I want to denounce how we pushed children to grow, denoting a lack of sensibility amidst the delicate balance between the socio-genetic and ontogenetic aspects of a child’s development. It was difficult to listen to their lamentations and more difficult to translate them into something hopeful. Speaking of my poetry, which has been a resource of stamina for my personal and professional reflection, it marked me, it introduced me to a terrain that I could never abandon, because it was a source of fiber that made me since my solidarity toward them, my complaints about the lack of sensibility and me, the child that proclaims in this present state of adulthood, the right to be treated as a complete bean. . . Not a copy. . . Dedicated to my students. . . That in their many stories allowed me to see the other side of that great childhood.

LA GRANDE NIÑEZ

No Kinder, there is no play.
 A thousand reprimands for playing.
 A thousand punishments for knowing.
 My childhood is saddened
 It is lost to me and hurts me.

Knowing much I suffer
 Because I am not supposed to be
 a person with yearnings
 a person with thoughts.

A being that claims
 her time to become amazed
 in the beauty of the flower

in the sweetness of the wet dew
and in the warmth of the sun

I am to be a revised copy
A copy of the history lived by the older ones
without knowing that they kill
the delicate essence,
the mischievous germ
of a longing childhood.

Metaphors and Poetry in Students' Reflections

One of the ideas that I put into motion some 8 years ago was the use of metaphors. How they seduce me with poetic images and how efficient they are to make the soul think! As always, the students are in bathrooms when they see the possibility of establishing another dialog, a dialog parallel to that one in the classroom, and between themselves and me. One of those students was Lourdes, with whom I had shared many dialogues on political, environmental, and personal topics. In the classrooms we had discussions on similar themes, related to human development and its interpretations. But the discussions of our initiatives led to the development of a critical dialogue and as such a dialogue with me after having answered one of her messages during a virtual forum. I recommend to my students to see human development in the metaphor of a tree, which allow to see how we consume and destroy development instead of understanding it. In fact, we read *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein⁶ in class. The same student narrated it and we elaborated some parallels between the human trace in the environment and the drama of the tree "that gave it all", with the drama of human development and growth. This story is a moving parable that offers and affects interpretation of the gift of giving, with its consequences. As part of the process of our deliberations, we discussed a proposal for a constructor definition of the study of human development in which sustainable human shared life depends precisely on the holistic and delicate vision with which we embrace our relations with others, and in this way commit ourselves to understand them politically. The student wrote the following lines:

though I could not meet with you last Thursday, I took the time to think about a metaphor or concept that has been bugging me for some time. The figure of the tree in many cosmologies, as lead me to believe that we have many things in common with the universe of life that surrounds us. Today I had a particular situation with a colleague at work which held me reflect on the millions of things that define and construct us. Even though there was nothing that related to meet directly, sometimes listening to others commits us to their emotions. I've taken the time to write you, because that way feel that I'm in your class and in communication with you. I share a few letters, and I hope to work with as part of the interactive forum on the theories of development in the course.

Here they are:

We are like a tree. . . We are a compendium of situations, pretensions and constructions that attempt to define us. We are universal connection, with those that are alive and have died.

We are. . . This does not imply a nation, does not imply color, does not imply language, we are what makes the planet vibrate, we are life.

Poem

I consider myself a tree trunk
 From which many branches and roots grow
 I am complexity inside and out
 To understand my growth
 Is to Understand my surroundings
 The conditions that make each day a little more possible
 The wind that dances with me
 Personifies the ebb and flow of life
 The highs and lows of my spirit
 In the interior, humid and heat
 The earth, my context defines
 Then. . . I am more than a trunk
 I am as much as a drop of rain
 As much as a ray of sunlight
 As much as a gust of wind. . .

Lourdes Torres⁷

The poetic-reflection occurs outside of the university classroom, in virtual connection with the classroom. She remains in her context as a student-worker-woman, a context from which she is not removed and which enriches the course of study itself. Her identity as a student has her referring to me as a professor: excusing herself formally from her absence and leaving clearly established that she has not stopped “being” in the course where she would usually share her reflections. She allows that her classmates read her, a situation that provoked other students to respond with their own reflections with the course. She speaks of *committing ourselves with the emotions of others*, and without explanation, her reflexive poem appears to relate to her identity of “solidarity.”

Another student, who is now finishing his master’s degree in education, wrote this: *Human development is like the creation of a poem, we gather a gamma of experiences, we incorporate them into our ideas which we described as versus what the viability of accessing transcendent as the years pass.* Another student wrote a metaphor of her development: *I believe my major metaphor is like a bunch of plantains. Yes, we grow in bunches of the human species, and leave it in bunches of shared life for shared life.* These other metaphors represent the integration of stages of life like chapters in a drama—tools that we create in culture and other human mediators:

My development is a work of art. It is a work of art that for years my family has devoted their effort and has developed with determination forging the person I am today. As all works of art require raw materials, skills, dedication, special details and particularly a long time and love until you reach the final product.

I think that the development of human beings is similar to the light of the aurora; during our life cycle we grow in wisdom and intelligence to reach our full maturity. As does sunlight, revealing itself gradually. As we acquire more understanding and we are equipped with more tools to work every day, that (knowledge) glow becomes wider. That same glare illuminates us showing the way towards our goals. And when we reach our maturity, our

light may guide others to move along the correct path until they reach their goals. Until the end, when the sunset in our lives befalls, human development continues with us. Perhaps in our bodies we cannot see it, but in our knowledge, ideologies and values we will continue being equipped with new tools.

Metaphors also enhance our capacity to imagine and wonder, making poetry out of our thoughts:

Poem

*My development is like the lighting of a candle.
In the beginning a person decides to light it,
We remember that it cannot light itself
In the process the candle offers us illumination,
more so it can even provoke an internal peace.*

*With time the candle consumes itself,
But continues its bright intensity
. . .like that on the first day*

*On the other hand, if we allow the winds to get to it,
It will turn off.*

*At the same time, if we want that it never cease to enlighten us, we continuously
light it.*

*But, in the end there arrives a moment when the candle turns itself off in a most
unexpected way,
On occasions when we most need it.*

Lourdes

Group Dynamics and Play with Young Souls

Why not affirm that the human being, more than a thinking being in isolation, is a feeling being that thinks? For my colleague Migdalia López Carrasquillo (2004), the human is a “Homo ludens” or “being that plays.” In fact, in all early childhood literature, play is the work of the child. But what of the youth and the adult? If anything atrophies our capacity to play and to be “silly” and it is the “cultural box” that imprisons us into it and mentions time, space, and power. Making use of the same cultural categories, *feeling-thinking* beings are freed of the confines of the social box while at the same time overcome the thresholds of the negative tension that degenerates our capacity to being motivated. This is why the dynamics that I construct and apply in the classroom have the objective of creating a climate of confidence, relaxation, and comradeship. The dynamics are plays that alter the routine, that subvert order, and that make the difference in human shared living. Such is the case with music: without dynamics music is only sounds combined in time and space, but without meaning. Dynamics marks the difference between boredom and interest; it is the special effects of the human being that contributes from its emotion and

to its emotion—joy, sadness, surprise, and disgust. All emotions speak and inform us of a history behind the sounds and the tones. The *feeling-thinking* effect is to music what oxygen is to air. Such is the effect in all of us in the activities in a classroom that are like the woven threads of the *mundillo* where each thread takes you to another and another and another to become a part of a beautiful and powerful pattern. Emotions—from the Latin *emovere*—which means to “move to the exterior” reveal themselves in the expression of body language, verbal and creative language, and also in reason, which is but one part of what we call an intelligent thought—of the Latin terms *intus legere*—“read inside” to understand (Subirats, 2007).

The classroom I craft involves many risky proposals for my students. One of these is to open the space to create game arenas using them as participants and subjects in the study of their own development. Nineteen years can make me do some weird activities or at least, very nontraditional ones. After showing a video of preschoolers, I ask my students to play jacks. Perplexed and shocked, they looked at me and exclaimed:

What are Jack's? And what do you mean play? This was a collective emotional response not expressed by anyone in particular, though. But their faces were telling me: You are crazy! Astonished as they were, they agreed, . . . no choice! Their doubts were there. Second call! People, you better move! We are going to play and it requires movement.

We played and engaged in many group dynamics, such as *Toca azul*, *La Tienda*, *La prenda*, *Bomba y escudo*, *Dibujantes de la palabra*,⁸ and many more. The more we played, the more engaged we all became. We are more willing to learn when we are relaxed, positively engaged (López Carrasquillo, 2004), and personally connected with our internal strengths (Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). These games and dynamics are focused on making people more conscious of their capacities to approach social events; how to enhance the possibilities of our emotions to deal with hypothetical cases; how to invent ways to approach conflict in a constructive way; and so forth. These dynamics are centered in pleasant and ludic activities that worth the spiritual dimension of the person. But they also move us to doing work that is nearly psychotherapeutic—urgent and necessary into our internal journey. What I also try is to convey spirituality—which is characterized by a profound sense of wonder, curiosity, and inquiry regarding the significance of life in addition to an awareness of own experiences and emotions—and our capability for imagination and play. Even as adults we can connect with a spontaneous and witty dimension of our being when we create the appropriate conditions, and in that sense students in their first years of university study are able to openly express this spontaneity. Tisdell (2001) informs of three dimensions known as further development of self-awareness, a sense of interconnectedness, and a relationship to a higher power that many adults recognize when it comes to spirituality. These three themes of spirituality appear to be common aspects of what spirituality is for most who consider it an important meaning-making aspect of their life. It is precisely the games and group dynamics that re-create an open environment that is at the same time clothes

and yet permissive and secure as we venture into our ludic and spiritual experience. To attend to the spiritual dimension of young adult learning is part of honoring the learner as “subject,” and thus the author of her/his own life in the quest for meaning making. Although Western culture tends to separate the intellectual, the emotional, and the spiritual spheres, they are actually interwoven in the individual person and in education as well. The link between them is fundamental in education at large, not only with students in schools, but also with every person. I sustain that good teaching fosters a connection among all of these dimensions, another reason why pedagogy in (e)motion is important as a concept and practice.

As Palmer (1998) suggests, good teaching also cultivates the connection among the educators as subjects who relate to themselves and to others, which includes the relationships with colleagues and students without losing professionalism. Within this relational dynamic that takes the educational processes to deeper levels, such as personal, emotional, internal, and the “nonpublic,” future educators can be in touch with their inner power and potential for understanding and transforming who they are, their lives, and what they can do in their classrooms. It is play that allows us use our imagination, intuition, and our bodies in nonconventional ways. These games are played for the sake of play that motivates us to use our imagination, intuition, and on occasion our bodies in nonconventional forms. These games or this play—some are roles—I have created or extracted from these or other projects are completed by my graduate student advisees.

In her presentation about Freire’s thought, Costa Rican scholar and friend Alicia Sequeira reminded me of the metaphor of the curriculum as a “road,” from the Latin *currere* (the Latin root of the word “curriculum”) which in Spanish means “carretera” (road, lane,). I immediately connected with my imagination: I placed myself in my classroom making of the teaching experience a constant series of questions of how, why, and toward what end do I develop my activities. This metaphor calls for a movement to our own inner personal world of psychological experience and in William Pinar’s conceptualization of curriculum, the meaning of research into the nature of the individual experience with the public. It was precisely in a conversation with Dr. Zequira, while a visiting scholar at the University of Puerto Rico in 1997, that I openly stated how psychologically engaged we as professors need to be with our own understanding of consciousness construction, appreciating the forces that facilitate or impede our interpretations. Notwithstanding, Pinar’s proposal, which could be seen as post form of the new method, originates in the 1970s, and calls for the opposition, to transgress, to connect with the constant current peak that allows a dynamic questioning of what is cognitively constructed and that which lies resting within that same construction. Pinar’s method calls for a reconceptualization of the meaning of curriculum by taking oneself and one’s existential experience as a data source and using the psychoanalytical technique of free association to build a multidimensional, not lineal, biography based on conceptual experience (Pinar, 1975).

Students' Narratives: The Power of the Anecdotes to Revisit Society and Schooling

For me, drama—not histrionicism—is part of the essence of the human being, and to recognize this I am obligated to go deeper into the writing of the being. According to Del Rfo and Alvarez (2007), even Vygotsky maintained that double link, between psychology and drama, throughout his life, and at the end of his work proposed a nexus between both approximations: drama as a model for the organization of the human psyche. If the need to give dramatic meaning to his life pushed him theoretically to psychology, then his theory of the dramatic mediation of the mind allowed him to elaborate in a very practical matter his own life. He lived at the personal level where his model permitted him to inscribe his own biography of psychology into the historical process. The two approximations provide the space for mutual learning and the critical reflection over innovative and inspirational international experiences, whether they be stories with happy endings or sad endings—emotions and storytelling bar, by far, the propellers of internal and analytic journeys.

Narratives are reflections in the form of a story, their strategies and resources used to exploit the student's talent toward creative writing, from the soul. Narratives—written and verbal—are a literary and daily way of communication; they are a story. Here what is emphasized is the use of emotions and feelings like engines that amplify the capacity to resolve situations or offer alternatives. The following are narratives of former students, here as storytellers in their classrooms. I have portrayed student-teachers teams as *reality transformers* on behalf of their hopes and dreams. Teachers must see schools as real arenas, theater or workshops *for* hope. Much of the popular perception about today's students is negative and pessimistic; they do not conceive students as actors or scientists and artistic thinkers. I've been using the students' narratives and poems from anecdotes or just from their guided inspiration in the course of Human Development to design threads of discussions, assessment tools, and pedagogical activities which I have called *Student-teachers narratives in e-motion*.

In the narratives, the students-teachers functioned as freelance writers, attempting to better understand and cope with future challenges they will face. The case studies and self-reflections helped students to analyze their beliefs and demonstrate how thinking about and reflecting on instructional and educational approaches could result in changed paradigms and improved teaching. One of most compelling responsibilities we can have on the human landscape of life is to live, learn, and write our own stories of this evolving landscape. Stories about who we are, what we do, our dreams and aspirations, our successes and our failures, our expectations of ourselves and others, our triumphs and disappointments, in other words, a kaleidoscopic view of where we are on the journey. Narratives also come combined with pain, surprise, joy, and deception, which is the case in the following:

I have won the big prize

Of years ago I was fortunate to meet Ernesto, a seven year old pre-adolescent with down syndrome, and who today remains one of my sources of knowledge and learning. He was presented as the “problem child” of the camp given that he demonstrated problems with conduct and very severe aggressive behavior. These comments cause me to sense a little insecurity and fear about how to confront his conduct. The marvelous thing about this camp was the exchange of knowledge that no book or institution could transmit. Getting Ernesto to overcome this aggressive stage was not an easy task, at first I had to earn his trust to then work as a team, and the key was in working with love without sacrificing firmness in my decisions. Because of this luck to have worked with “the problem child” of the camp, an expression that I never liked and one that I feel was far removed from the reality of this pre-adolescent enterprising and struggling young man, I can in all sincerity say that I developed a keen and new sense of hope and the illusion of possibility in the face of adverse situations that life presents us. Those lived experiences with Ernesto, where there was a learning and teaching bidirectionally, were infinite. We can be lucky, but if we are not lucky enough to discover situations that lead us to strengthen our values we then tend to feel incomplete and empty. Is always important to have a sense of emotional balance in our development as human beings. I was lucky enough to find myself again with me, of strengthening my values, of redefining my priorities because I quote have won the big prize” of living experiences of a natural education without limits, among those having met Ernesto.

Jennifer

The Arithmetic Class

As a child the arithmetic class always made me nervous. It was the last class in the morning; 30 minutes before recess. The homeroom teacher, Sister Rosa, had as a routine in all a review of the multiplication tables just minutes before class would end. The student with the most correct answers would receive a little prize or additional points accredited to the test at the end of the month. Sister Rosa was very strict in class. She had a very stern face in a peculiar anger always which she projected through her eyes. Her maternal instinct was sterile. My desk was almost at the end of the first row in the class. Jose Sereno sat to my left in the second row. I admired and envied Jose because of his intelligence, his discipline, and above all, the neatness of his uniform. Every first Friday of the month, the school’s uniform was white. José’s uniform looked like it had been tailor-made. Its tone was immaculate. Behind José, in the last position, there was Malén Saldaña’s desk. She arrived late to the school that year; she looked older than the rest of the students in the class. We were in the third grade, but she looked like she was in the fifth grade. To us, Malén Saldaña was a strange one. I would often observe Malén through the corner of my eye. On one occasion, secretly, I could see the drawings that she did in art class. I’d never seen masks like this before. The mysterious figures fascinated me, but because of my shyness, I never asked. However, my shyness was nothing compared with hers. Every time Malén had to answer a question, she would put her head down, would think for a while, and would respond with “I don’t know”. For some reason, Sister Rosa decided on this occasion, to begin a review of the multiplication tables with only five minutes left in the art class. During the exercise, it was important that we answer quickly, if we did not know the answer, we had to stay at her feet until this “via crucis” had been completed. Sister Rosa moved about with such speed around the classroom, but she seemed to practically fly in her habit. At times we could hear her voice, but we did not exactly where she was; it which point in the classroom she had stopped. Then, Sister Rosa appeared in front of me—precisely when the bell was ringing announcing recess—but she turned halfway around. Lock struck the desk of Malén Saldaña. Malen lowered her head, and trembling like a sick were, could not answer. She started to cry her usual cry accompanied by a chorus of children that repeated, “the buttry

one began to cry, the buttery one began to cry” . . . I hid behind the chorus of those voices, without knowing if I should cry, scream, or sing.

Luis

Luis and Jennifer shared different narratives from educational and therapeutic scenarios and from different social and institutional agencies in our country, but both raise issues of engagement, solidarity, power, and love. Both in different locations: Luis was a classmate and student; Jennifer was a mentor or tutor. From their particular locations, both felt and described some kind of discomfort, anguish, fear, joy, acceptance, surprise, sadness, and anticipation: a whole range of emotions. Luis’s asset was the power to reflect over issues of prejudice and diversity with honesty and compassion with himself. Jennifer’s asset was renaming the problem. We write our stories by living them again. The dialogue and reflection between where we are, and where we want to go is the voice that builds our direction and hope for the future, by remembering and feeling the past.

In *Pedagogy of Hope*, Freire gives us undaunted strength in a world of promise and possibilities. Hope is the human spirit’s way of responding to the future of a dream or the faith in a new beginning. Nothing can be achieved without hope. No builder ever laid a brick without hope. No poet ever put a pen to paper without hope. No painter ever put a brush to canvas without hope. No teacher ever transformed a child’s life without hope, but we all know that hope is not enough. We need to articulate hopes into realities. As Riggs and Serafin (1998) said our students—the younger and the older ones—look to us for wisdom and guidance, as they begin the dialogue that will orchestrate the choreograph their dance with life. Writers such as bell hooks, Paulo Freire, and many other critical educators invite us to appeal to the imagination, the emotions, and the risky adventures of personal pronouncements to engage our students as cultural creators and transformers. What will we, as educators, contribute to the musical score of their lives? How can we ensure that the rhythm puts them in concert with the “beat” or requirements and demands of the society in which they will be expected to function as contributing participants? What type of lyrics can we provide for them that will encourage, empower, inspire, and challenge them to strive for highest peak of their mountain of dreams? Sometimes, in the rush of “doing education” we often fail to just stop and “listen to the music” as Riggs and Serafin (1998). We overlook the real protagonists—students—of the orchestra. Figure 5.5 looks like an “orchestra” map, and recollects the main issues in language, theory-practice, and self-vision.

Students have the materials we give to them—instruments—to perform and at the rehearsal miss the beautiful melodies they are so capable of creating and performing. However, when we take time, step back, reflect on, and record the words and deeds of both the instruments and the conductor (teacher), it is then that the discords can be examined, replayed, and corrected, helping create a harmonious teaching and learning environment where the collective voices of students and teachers share in a vision. Many of our activities are philosophically expressed from a sociohistoric and cultural perspective—as elaborated in the works of Vygotsky and other critical pedagogical authors like bell hooks, Joe Kincheloe, Paulo Freire,

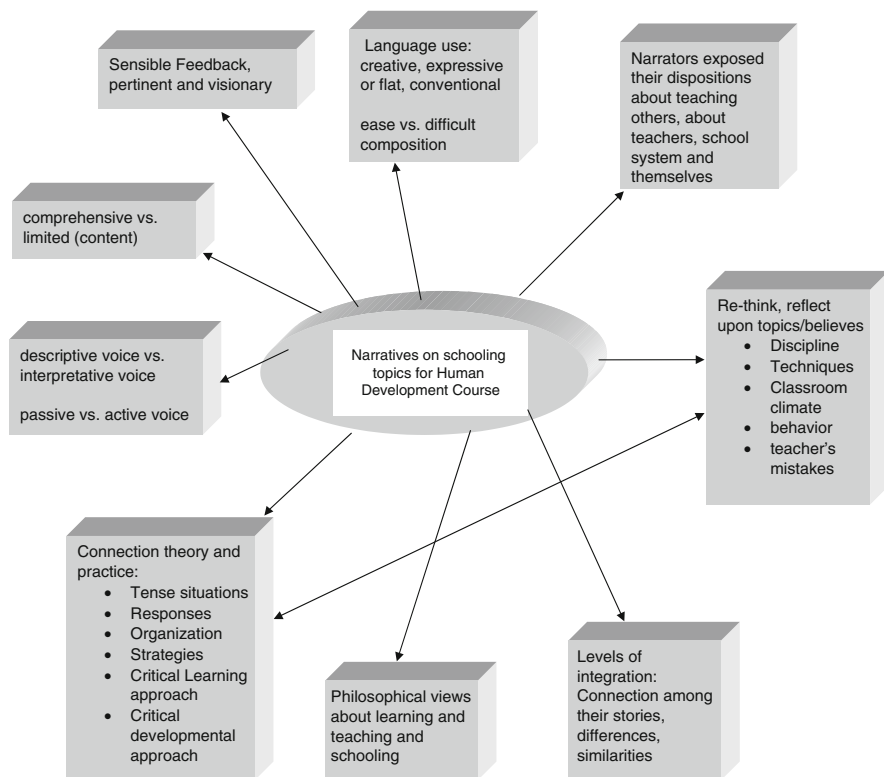


Fig. 5.5 Narratives analysis map: From the experience to interpretation

Ruth Behar, among others. To leave fluid, “open the authority” to the students so that they might share their narratives of their lives, of their significant events, has been to open up a magical space where they position themselves as authors and free writers. Then, the revelations of those stories are unleashed making us vulnerable observers, as Ruth Behar expresses, because our mission is to understand the other and as such understand our own pedagogical rules, prejudices, shortcomings, contradictions, values, and counter-values.

By the same token, in courses on the evaluation of early childhood I use *narratives to see our own history as learners*. Narratives also facilitate multiple perspectives and levels of self-analysis. In an activity titled *Cómo yo sabía que sabía?* (*How did I know that I knew?*) the students realized how much their personal stories relate to their educational views and practices. As bell hooks says in *Teaching to Transgress*, experiences inform why we know what we know. From the location of our memory we inform our experiences and these experiences are interpreted. Whenever we write narratives of our childhood, we read them aloud. Each narrative has a story and history and speaks about events, scenarios, the school, and home; the plot and conflict inherent to a story. The interpretation within the

narrative comes easily and it is what provokes our discussions in class. Narratives become our official text, a text of multiple layers and colors, which provides the melody for other “texts” in the class. Each piece expresses much more than just learning in the traditional sense. Each narration embraces the historical and cultural context of that learning. We look for significant events on our lives for interrogating our hypothesis; explanations and contradictions; connection with other experiences; other comments add problem posing dialogues.

Another variation of this type of exercise of narratives is the life history study, which we elaborate using the technique of a daily journal that could well be field notes and research notes of personal interest that we might document. One of my most remembered students—today a professional social worker—developed a wonderful notebook written as a novel; each chapter was a detail of some stage in the life of the person interviewed, with a student’s analysis and interpretations that they shared with me. In the end the student would ask the interviewer to pick pictures that would describe her and create a collage that would be used as a cover for the notebook. He titled it *La Venus de Mártir* and it was quite a jewel: a project completed intercourse on human growth and development. And it had 10 chapters including his interpretation and analysis and eight different encounters with his interviewee where each encounter was a different chapter in her life.

Research Projects, Field Experiences, and Community Workshops

Research projects in the field and the workshops for the community schools help us to move across the campus giving back and learning from others. Research projects are always fountains of knowledge that relate the students with real situations, situations that they want to study in which can be initiated and completed in one semester. The goal of the workshops in school is twofold: the participation of the group in the design and the generation of knowledge (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004). We sign for workshops in schools surrounding community the university with the intention is to share and learn from participants and fellow teachers, the content to be discussed in a friendly way, and in such a way that all can learn, communicate, and debate. There are large doses of preparation in these kinds of activities, studying consultation since in general they are carried out in pairs or small groups. There is also an element of dynamic knowledge—that is to say movements from previous knowledge to possible knowledge; a world where not all is known, but where sufficient challenges are present for you to explore. Dynamic knowledge requires individual meaning making based on multiple sources of information. The role of critical educators is to facilitate the movements toward that zone. This is what Vygotsky’s understanding constitutes a potential development zone defining the mediated role of the educator, as Albert Labarrere cites, to accompany and reveal the purposes of our pedagogy. As such, dynamic knowledge is revealed through real-world performance, the kind of performance students confront in action research and peer mediation. There is

a simultaneous manifestation of emotions and sensations with respect to learning because university students usually do not incur in research projects during the first or second year: a process which is contrary to the inquisitive and creative nature of human beings. The next quote is an example of how a student values peer collaboration and field-research experiences:

In addition to reaching my experience in writing and field research, I'll need to learn more about family conduct and in particular each component of that conduct: Trabajo de campo #2.doc.⁹ I would have liked to have had these experiences in a Group form but I did not have the opportunity because of my academic load; if in the next part of the class we have to do new research projects that I will not lose the opportunity. I think that my work would take on deeper meaning were it to be done in collaboration with other classmates.

Action research is a living educational theory and young souls who experienced the live action in schools and communities feel the challenge for it. For young university students, first time invited to investigate about their own perceptions in education and child development, research activity calls for “good fear” and surprise. We all have a set of educational values and by reflecting and looking to improve our own practice, we’re not only adhering fully to these values, we are contradicting ourselves, which makes it fundamental to put the living “I” in the very center of the enquiry. From here we act as both the practitioner and the reporter in the given enquiry. When students do research projects on themes that they choose and that move them, all of them identify with being the researcher, the inquisitive and creative person that lives in them. The structure that is offered is minimal because the inquiry into their own hypotheses of work results both provocative and motivational I always offer them a large list of research projects, short and doable that all can review and then choose according to interest, or so they can develop some or any of the offered themes in their own inventive and initiated way. The possibilities are many, from the preparation of a genealogical tree to school interventions as practical experience. I offer them a guide to organize their ideas in different sections for the presentation of a written project: “*introduce your work and your theme and inspiration,*” “*which authors did you review,*” “*what are you proposing and how do you plan to develop it,*” “*who will be your participants,*” “*describe, organize, and discuss your results*” and “*conclude, revisit, and think of the future.*” We approach research in a very practical manner; it is a tool for social and personal improvement, but has to be conducted for the sake of understanding, reflecting, and questioning. This kind of focus about research in the course on the foundations of human development has allowed the students to increase their competencies in order to relate their hypotheses and beliefs with knowledge, understanding, and their capacity to question and to question themselves; in addition they strengthen their competencies in the search for information, call operative work in the making of connections between schools and their communities. In general, students with artistic talents tend to find one another and form groups of work. For example music students, those from the areas of arts or theater, or the sciences tend to pool together, work together, and express their works as a group. Some of these works have been presented in congresses or research conferences held at the university, but the most important

thing is that it helps them to understand the value of research activity in the form of part of the responsibility that should be expected of teachers. The following quote is an example of this feeling:

You feel is this along with research projects were for me a challenge, since never before had I had the opportunity to research some of the themes and arrive at conclusions based on some educational theorists. My first experience was in doing a survey with students from a high school with respect to their knowledge about abortion. It was a unique and unforgettable experience. The same experience to help me to understand the questions and concerns that the students had with this theme in specific and other related themes. I learned about my own prejudices that many times become a barrier and obstacle not allowing me to see a broader view. In the end, this activity was my favorite, because I learned there was insufficient to read and interpret the readings of the book, rather that research is a practice through which we enrich our learning and development.

Field experience and action research both promote the development of critical reflectivity (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004). The school workshop made us see reality beyond the comfort zone of the university. Additionally, the activity put the students in the role of researchers of their respective school's needs. By seeing schools as a sort of "cultural laboratory," available for critique, interpretation, and discussion, students begin to understand both why schools operate the way they do. They also perceive who benefits from one method of school operation over another. The message seems to be that if what we want is more competent, able, and more well-adjusted teachers, increased time in school settings provides one fruitful means of assuring this end; and so we must invest more time on field experiences in programs of teacher preparation.

The workshop on children's and adolescent literature was an activity that I considered quite attractive and motivating because I learned about how stories are analyzed in their application in the learning process. I could interpret different messages and carry out different processes for the development of the imagination. That is how we prepared ourselves to enter into the school community.

*It was a grand and pleasant challenge that the professor invited us to take. To go to school, that is but a short walk from the university campus and that we knew very little about, and to give a workshop about how to use the story of *Winnie the Witch*¹⁰ with teachers in a lesson on motivation. . . Wow! First, we consulted with the teachers to see if we would be received, discussed themes of interest to them. Period. Then carry out the complete production.*

But it is also true that experiences that promote uncritical replication of observed practice are antithetical to the purposes of education itself. Promoting activities for student teachers and others that generate such perspectives is, thus, contradictory to some fundamental purposes of education as this is often understood (Beyer, 1984; Zambrana, Alvarez & Maldonado, 2008). In addition to being potentially miseducative, field experiences that promote utilitarian perspectives, replication of "successful" teaching practice, and uncritical acceptance of the educational status quo also may serve to further the ideological nature of school practices and processes. By emphasizing the socially constructed nature of schooling, and knowledge, and hence the need to problematize what we take for granted, the possibility for alternative action is opened as well as creativity is *cultivated* (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004). In the end, such preparation may serve as a vehicle to question the

very ideology of schooling that is usually fostered by more traditional forms of fieldwork, increasing its educative and political salience. In their experiences, the students reflected on their experiences:

The experiences and field projects I conducted individually because I thought group work, collecting information, and discussing it to reach consensual conclusions would delay the results.

I worked on the issue of violence in schools and I looked for tools to deal with the problem. It was through this experience when, interviewing adolescents, that I understood them better, learned to see their points of view, and connect with them. Many times I wonder, wow!, How is it possible that we not listen to them more often?

Effective teacher education programs in colleges and universities should have as essential components of their course of study action research, case-situation studies, on-site observations, and teacher reflections. These three elements are catalytic for providing pre-service and practicing teachers with the tools to personally gather information and evidence that will aid them in making decisions about better practices, effective instructional strategies, and appropriate instructional materials. They will also help teachers construct a critical bridge between theory and practice, aiding them in the process of learning how to solve issues and problematize them. In addition, these methods will illustrate how “thinking about and reflecting on” instructional approaches and practices may result in a paradigmatic change and improved teaching, as Kincheloe and Berry (2004) also pointed out. As a part of the means of the course of educational psychology, I always dedicate much time to the discussions of what many educators understand as research and the relationships that it has to field experiences in the schools. With this in mind, we must recognize that we are subjective beings whose strength resides not in that we can see “the same thing,” instead that we can see from different angles that “same thing” reinterpreting and reinventing it. Then, we critically take the postmodern dialectic as a point of departure and paradigm for the provocation of innovative interpretations, alternate methods, connections between disciplines that we did not see before, and contradictions that help to understand the complex reality.

The Opening for More. . .

The very history of humanity is a reflection of evolutions and revolutions that are scientific, artistic, and technological. This paradigm provides the impulse to action research in a classroom because it validates the experience of the educator, not because the “expert” from afar observes objectively to look for empirical evidence (Phillips & Carr, 2006; Kincheloe & Berry, 2004). This is why the teacher’s narratives and student’s narratives that dwell into the research practices and their dispositions tell a story of many forms reflecting a diversity and a particularity in each educational context, without sacrificing the systematic characteristic of research, and the consistency and rigor associated with its execution. Because of this, nothing should detain classroom teachers from questioning their own pedagogical practices, where like their students they also learned of their own processes and products.

Notes

1. This quote was translated from Spanish by my colleague Dr. Solís Jordán.
2. Ed Young grew up in China. As a boy, he was always drawing. His work has been exhibited in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and he has won many awards. He has written and illustrated many fables and stories for children. The alluded book is titled *The Seven Blind Mice* (1992), Puffin Publishers, Honk Kong.
3. All student-teachers portfolios began with an introductory part of themselves.
4. I am very grateful to Dr. Juan Carlos Vadi who raised my baroque graphic conception into this one.
5. [Chapter 9](#) will narrate and discuss the incident and its impact on the faculty at the College of Education, University of Puerto Rico 31.
6. Harper Collins Publishers, 1964. A tender story-parable, illustrated with simplicity, touched with sadness, aglow with consolation, about a tree and a boy who turned into an old man.
7. All students, identified or not, with their names gave permission to quote their works, with their names or a typology. Majority or of quotes are from students and extracted from their portfolios of the courts, all of which became an object for various presentations and articles of research for which consent was authorized in 2003.
8. The dynamics of *La Tienda, Toca Azul y Dibujantes de la palabra* I learned with Tinus Wignakker, a Dutch teacher, who was visiting the University of Puerto Rico in 1991; *Bomba y escudo y el Nudo Humano* I learned with Dr. Rocío Costa, a Puerto Rican professor of Curriculum; and *La prenda* I learned in a workshop offered by Amnesty International in Boston in 1993.
9. This was a link of the actual work the student conducted in the course.
10. Written by Valerie Thomas and illustrated by Korky Paul (1987), Oxford University Press.

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Chapter 6

Ideas in Motion: Students as Researchers, Tourists, Artisans, Storytellers and Bricoulers

Bricoleur = handyperson who makes use of tools available.
in Kincheloe and Berry, 2004

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Students are always a step ahead of us—who try to educate them—in many aspects: technology, pop culture, what matter them in their stage of development. I recall what my oldest daughter, Aura, told me when she was nine: *Nobody can decide my future*. In that precise moment I felt that she was a step ahead of me and that she was resistant to be predicted. To acknowledge this assertion of herself doesn’t mean that I am totally prepared for her challenges as student and person, but it will remind me about the power of her will. It is a challenge for progressive educators to resist the temptation to adjust and accommodate to the comfort zone of being in the mainstream. To be indifferent and “neutral,” occupied only with the traditional teaching routines, is part of the pedagogy of indifference. The educational effort is reduced and degraded to the simple transmission of information within which “power” does

not reside, instead in how well it's able to reduce theoretical knowledge—that is important—in mere disconnected data. This is the pseudo-education that uses theory and all the knowledge that has been the result of the historical production and processes of interpretations and research, for intellectual consumerism and not for the production of knowledge (Subirats, 2007). That knowledge, in order to be genuine, must materialize itself in the social and cultural context that assigns its significance. Fortunately, critical educators arise from critical students, who on behalf of their heritage, pride, unconformity, and thirst for justice, move and infuse college classrooms with hope, bringing up new challenges to college educators. They are the artisans and bricoulers¹ of their own education; they just need us to provide the opportunities and spaces for creation, questioning, and researching and re-design their educational tools and ideas. In the inspiring book titled *Why We Teach*, editor Sonia Nieto (2005) presented 5 medullar qualities of caring and committed teachers, brought up from 21 essays written by diverse group of schoolteachers from elementary and secondary levels: a sense of mission; solidarity with and empathy for students; courage to question mainstream knowledge; improvisation and a passion for social justice. You will find these qualities and much more in the following pages, brought up by teacher candidates—undergraduate students.

Xaymara, a former student of mine, was in her second-year in the College of Education when she accepted the challenge of action research, which was to assume theory as a questionable matter. Today she works as a teacher in an elementary school of her native Vieques. As a resident of Vieques, Puerto Rico, she chose a research project, for the Human Development course which proposed a comparison of the drawings from students at an elementary school in San Juan and students from an elementary school on the island municipality of Vieques. She compared and analyzed the free theme drawings of 15 children from each of the two schools. The school in San Juan was the University of Puerto Rico's Elementary Lab school. The group was made up of third graders. The student teacher asked all of the children that had drawn to express themselves regarding the drawings. The drawings represented a political dimension of childhood thoughts and feelings. Through the drawings they showed differences in the way that the landscape was "read," while expressing themselves within a broader social context. Its diversity was precedent in various aspects of their lives but came to life in their drawings: forms of interaction between themselves and their society. The comparative analysis compelled—the student teacher and myself—to admit that different thematics existed, through the use of different elements, in the form through which the children of Vieques and the children from the metropolitan area express themselves in their drawings about their environment and their surroundings: the different forms of interaction between them and their society, the daily events, and their preoccupations. In the case of the drawings from Vieques the children drew the military presence and the damage that they perceived. From a Human Rights Education perspective, children's productions are great pedagogical resources as well as an expressive valve which help teachers and students connect and explore sociocultural contexts and interpretations of children (Yudkin Suliveres, Zambrana Ortiz, & Pascual Morán, 2002). They presented flags

of Puerto Rico like symbols of struggle that people carry against a military presence. With regard to the children from the metropolitan area to a majority they are true caricatures, characters from movies and television. However, we did notice some interesting signs of political acknowledgment with respect to the situation of the conflict between Puerto Rico and the U.S. Navy and again it was to be evidenced by the presence of Puerto Rican flags in some of these drawings. It is worth mentioning that in the metropolitan area of the North almost no house or residence has the Puerto Rican flag. This flag represents resistance and vigilance by the Puerto Ricans in the presence of the abuse at the hands of the U.S. Navy. This factor, in reality quite rare, was very present in the imagination of the children from the metropolitan area and they expressed it as such. It could be that the presence of these flags represented signs of resistance in triumph in the midst of a crisis that allowed that various political themes and ethical themes be discussed that were generally not discussed in schools nor in the homes: the colonial situation of Puerto Rico, different postures regarding the human rights from the perspective of the international community, among others. On the other hand, Vieques was also a media event that managed to educate people with respect to the history given that documentaries and other types of video transmissions were presented on television from historical perspectives and others. The Vieques affair and the initiative by the Puerto Rican people became an excellent point of departure for the manifestation of political, spiritual, and moral dimension in children's thinking and is a wake-up call for the university students to take a risk and express themselves as political agents in education (Zambrana Ortiz, 2009). Highlighting these dimensions in childhood thought is the responsibility of critical educators because the child has a right to a pedagogy that defies his or her sociopolitical creativity and intelligence with which they learn to be democratic beings in solidarity with their environment.

Since 2001, Xaymara Romero was already versed as a student with a trajectory in community work and political educational work between Vieques and the Big Island, asserting herself in the university project for information and guides aimed at developing educational modules of information with respect to housing and sustainable development, among other themes.² This project converted modules into a series of comics on themes considered fundamental to the population of Vieques, and Xaymara was one of the authors of the texts, under the direction of a colleague of the General Studies Faculty, Dr. Lilliana Cotto. The research project undertaken by Xaymara in our course, as is the case with many students who continue graduate studies, and with whom I have had the privilege of working and mentoring, is an example of how inquisitive he is and explores his spirit of students with respect to development and human potential to become motivated for research, exploration into their own lives, their own perspectives, and those of the professors and their mentors. In Fig. 6.1, using the activity map-web, students' action research becomes another thread for the classroom *mundillo*. Action research from field experiences creates possibilities to free students from texts and readings, although the method is not as important as "the spaces" where subordinate students move from an object to a subject position (Bartolomé, in Macedo, 1994).

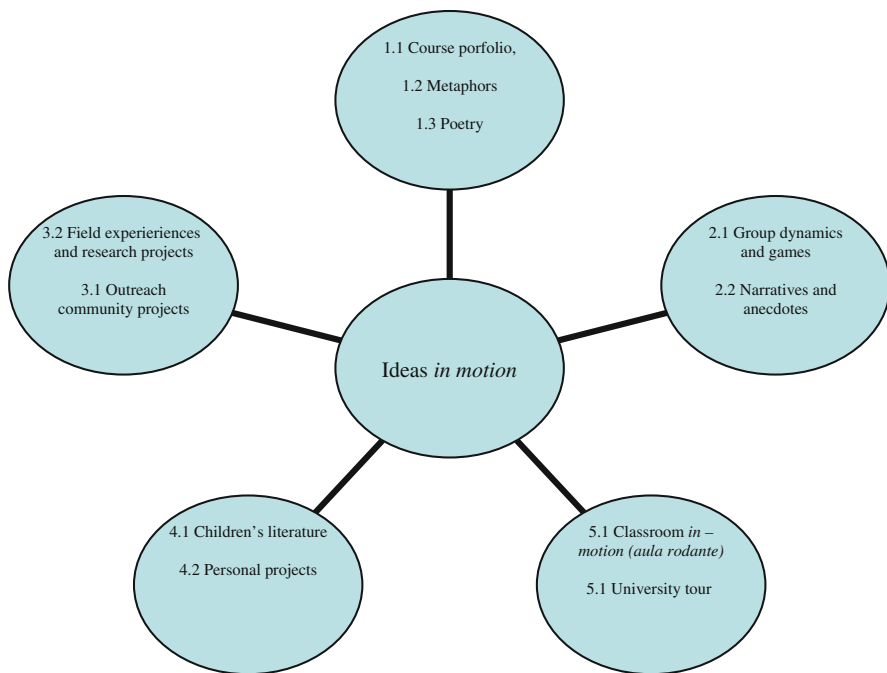


Fig. 6.1 Ideas in motion for a sensible learning

Michelangelo's Personal Project: The Rise of the Writer Within

Writing was not a passion for Michelangelo (suggestive name), but without a doubt it certainly was an avenue from which he would reinvent himself as an artist in that which became a personal project for him in one of my courses. “I’m an artist, I do not write!” was the excuse given by the student to avoid written work in the course of educational psychology. His major semiotic tool was his art, but it was his writing that freed him from that comfort zone. Writing is, without a doubt a social, historical and cultural process because it is a mean of rethinking in the present what has been thought and upon being written becomes the past to be revised, validated, and even changed. The pencils or the computers are artificial instruments with which we articulate the intimate and internal worlds—thought-feelings—on paper or on the monitor. This is why upon listening to university students and connecting with their anguish as if it were mine—quite possibly if they were to ask me to solve an algebraic problem—makes the reflection urgent. My reflections on my own practices and errors related to a lack of scrutiny beyond the goals in my course, have provided me the terrain for the creation and adaptation of pedagogical experiences. Some of these practices use technology as a means for expression in the development of competencies in the area of education, others with field experiences as a vehicle for research and creation, and yet others related to problem-based learning. Certainly

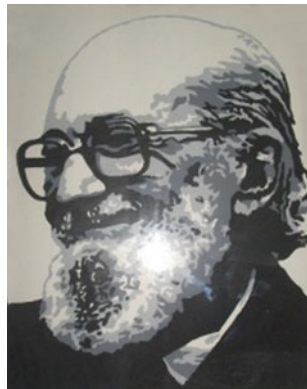
many adult students, conditioned by a banking methods of education, neglect that they have the abilities to express their thoughts in more than one way. This was the case with Michelangelo.

Student teachers can be writers of their success stories and therefore can unleash their students' talents through personal projects. The most recent studies with respect to cerebral functions and learning indicate that rich experiences produce *rich brains* and that the absence of a stimulating environment provokes, literally, *scars upon suffered and sad brains* (in Pascual-Morán, 2007). Expressive, effective, and intuitive experiences are those that truly determine if a latent potential germinates as a talent or if it is laid to waste destroying the sensibilities transforming into an emotionally sick mind or even a criminally intelligent mind (Nash, in Pascual-Morán, 2007). The challenge before us in the university, while dealing with large sections of students—mine always have 25–27 students enrolled—and various in the same semester, obligates us to establish realistic and sensible objectives in order to attend that diversity of talents, aspirations, and “dormant potential.”

I decided to challenge Michelangelo's artistic intellect. I trusted his bet on his capacity to create and speak to himself introspectively, as done by other graphic artists, in the intimacy of their workshops. There was only one option: face a challenge before him which he accepted as a major one: I gave him two tasks. The first was to read the biography of Paulo Freire, written by Costa Rican educator and philosopher Jacinto Ordóñez who was conducting a seminar on Freire's Thought as a visiting scholar. Dr. Ordóñez kindly shared with me a draft of the biography of Paulo Freire that he was working on. Michelangelo read the biography and explored deeply each stage in the life of Paulo Freire on his three historical life periods: Life in Brazil and Exile; Internationalization, and The Return to Brazil.

The second task: study his life and translate your analysis in an iconographic form. Then it was that the artist found a form that allowed him to breathe with that which impassioned him. He reviewed different photos of Freire which he found in different books. Michelangelo decided to create a silk screen.³ “I have my workshop, and there I will do it.” That was the challenge he assumed in which he decided would become one of his major tasks in the course. It took the task to a zone in which he felt competent as well as challenged. He also took his assignment to another level: he broadened it, because it wasn't merely about summarizing or critically writing about Freire; instead it was a graphic elaboration in a most complex and elaborate form. Additionally, he wrote a three-page essay, narrating the entire process of *thought-feeling* with all he had done, that he sat, that he read the biography, of how that man impacted in his life, of the gaze, the profound nature of his teachings and the wisdom that one could read in his face, the look of love and hope, of anguish, when he observed the oppressed campesinos. Michelangelo developed his graphic expression in tones of black and gray, creating difficult shades with monochromatic colors; with him I learned that silk screening in black and white is very difficult. His essay was very authentic: a narration written of his creative and reflexive process. In this way his creations were two: the iconographic and the written. According to his written essay, the experience was for him like a trip with Freire through space and time.

Fig. 6.2 Paulo Freire's serigraphy by Michelangelo



But, he did not finish here. Here began another personal project with the faculty, with professors, and with the Puerto Rican society: Michelangelo decided to reproduce 12 silk screens like this one (Fig. 6.2), offering to me the first one as a gift and donating the others to an educational-political cause. That semester, my colleague, Dr. José Solís, was being accused of conspiring against the government of the United States, a theme which was broadly and deeply discussed in my classes, as an instance for a critical reading of the facts, considering the many previous instances in which the federal government and independentistas have clashed since the 1930s. The student said: “Professor, here are the silk screens, do with them as you wish, sell them to help the professor with his legal defense. Take these [my art] as my contribution to the cause.” My students knew that I was coordinating José’s support group at the university. The groups in acronym was UPRASO.⁴ It became an assignment, a far-reaching life project for him, one in which he as a student helped us collect resources for their cause. It was truly extraordinary and forged a grand story in the pedagogy of solidarity. This exemplifies the giving, a solidararian love that turns desire into a concrete action. A grand story . . . from saying that he could not write because artists don’t write, to discover himself as a writer of another “text,” the iconographic text that opens the window to the written text. The artists forge their text within the borders of their medium, in their works. He finally made his masterpiece and I remember what he wrote a short story of it:

I studied some photos, did several tests with greys, I read his biography, I started to consider how to paint what I was reading, the expression of his face, covering his life. The time of exile and the time of internationalization, and the time of returning to his homeland. His aged face was a reminder of that life of many struggles. . .

Writing is also an activity for the resolution of problems that raises diverse questions from many directions: before, during, and after; over issues from the author, of the author, of authority, of authenticity, among many others. Writing obligates us to direct and transform evidence and general patterns that characterize that transformation; it leads us to formulate hypotheses and inferences, as well as relations of the parts with the whole. Writing implies transcribing or the transformation of

thought and, on occasion, speech in the presence of a blank page; it also consists of the recognition of errors that, due to routine, we become accustomed to committing, among other multiple operations. Above all else, in the academic contexts in which we find ourselves, in which we locate ourselves, it supposes the necessity of seeing language as their repertoire of tools (Cruz-Velázquez & Castañer-Martínez, 2000). These tools serve the processes and structure of research, and so will my presentation of the work of Michelangelo. Surely writing is not a transparent process, nor easy even when we are inspired. Writing presupposes difficulties and demands diverse mental processes that present themselves simultaneously.

The process of writing implies a series of processes and sub-processes that are interrelated and organized by the writer himself (Cruz-Velázquez & Castañer-Martínez, 2000). Additionally, it supposes an interesting dimension of time since what we write immediately becomes the past. In this activity the word bursts like an instrument of work that comes to life through the extension of displaced time—fundamentally, in a continuum of going and coming and not necessarily lineal as with previous phases of planning prior to writing, until the direct confrontation with the blank sheet or scattered notes, finalizing with a revision of the written product. And process and product is always unfinished because it is always subject to scrutiny—ours and others—and being given form to the intimate and particular characteristics of our students. Writing is experienced as an activity and as a production with its particular discursive demands. Pedro Salinas (1972, p. 19) states: “Because language is a light bridge of sounds that man casts into the air, which then passes from the lone individual, to the other side of the similar, moving from a state of solitude to one of company.” As a bridge for “uniting edges and sides,” language is a metaphor and a challenge that every university professor needs to assume. And written language is a human technology that requires the accompaniment of the teacher in elementary and secondary schools and also the university professor with young adults, forging creative spaces, the development of talents in the nourishment of sensible minds driven by a sense of solidarity and the decision to take action.

Storytellers and the Metaphor “Maestra-Cuento”⁵: Children and Juvenile Literature

Once upon a time [1994] a teacher who decided to convert her students into reporters of the year 2000. . . And they wrote their news and documented the events of their communities. . . They took videos and photos, and they found out that hope only was within them and in their aspirations of being productive. . . and they enjoyed.⁶

I have always thought that the most difficult tasks are for the best. I respect deeply vocation of teachers. My father was a teacher, my great aunt as well as my brother and sisters-in-law. I journeyed late into education, well after beginning my university studies, that to my understanding presents particular challenges. And not all of us are doctors, but all doctors had to pass through the hands of various teachers. Not all of us are architects, psychologists, or dramatists, but all of them had teachers that

educated them. That is why I say that the most difficult task, the most delicate task, is the task of the teacher. It is because educators are, at the heart, storytellers. We are artists and organize our thoughts and attempt to communicate curricular content; you use many stories full of imagination and creative energy. We are speakers and creators; they have begun to recognize the open and legitimate enormity of possibilities of re-creating our personal and professional histories, and as such reconstruct our own pedagogical experience—the story that we write in and from education.

As reviewed by Pascual-Morán (2004), the resurgence of “storytellers” has generated various multicultural and multidisciplinary initiatives for the construction of different conceptualizations of the narrative. The stories I read in class have become a magnificent source of inspiration for the students; in fact, through children’s and adolescent literature we discover a window of multiple possibilities. But the stories that the students themselves create, from the perspective of their experience, of their anecdotes, mark a fertile soil for a double inquiry, that which informs their life as a treasure of the memory of their knowledge as creators as well as the figure that the story projects of the teacher in pedagogical action. It is this type of narration-story-lived experience that permits us to *arm the accounts* in such a way that we can speak of *oral works* and of *written works* (Pascual-Morán, 2004) while at the same time take advantage of the resource as an oral history and historical document. The personal narratives rescue the cognitive subject imbued within the social context. This is the reason for the many stories I have of my students; stories that testify and review the intimacy of their being. I remember the story of the child—the adult student—that would hide in empty boxes making these her house and hiding place; she would decorate it with her brother and bear spending many hours pretending to be in a haunted castle until called to dinner by her mother. I also promote the creation of narrative stories as linguistic and authentic productions of students’ ideas and reflections. I remember La Poli-Maestra,⁷ a warm narrative in the form of anecdote written by Laura, whose major is psychology and took the course as an elective. She wrote the following piece:

La Poli-Maestra

“The Multi-Teacher”

I was in third grade, in a Catholic school. I was a student of a teacher that impacted me greatly, even to this day. She taught Spanish, but she was not like a teacher. The first day of class, she came into the room, and presented herself as Mrs. Eva Padró. She took roll and said she had to leave for a moment to go look for something. She left through the front door and some five minutes later returned through the back door. This time, she had two bows in her hair, a blanket and a little stuffed bear; she said the bear’s name was “Beba” and that she wanted to learn with us. She began to get class, without changing this new attitude and a voice that accompanied it. We studied diminutives. . . And our teacher was a “bebita,” “niñita” or “muñequita” as she would have us know her. At the end of class, she said she had to leave and give her bear honey, that she wanted to play with toys and that she wanted cookies. She went out the back door; five minutes later Mrs. Eva entered with the papers she had initially said was going to look for. Mrs. Eva did this three of five classes every week. During the morning hours, between classes, during snack time, during the recess, and at the end of the day, she was like any other homeroom teacher. But we are always anxious to know what new personality would arrive in the classroom on a given day. Some days she would

come in as her twin sister, one Mrs. Twin, to give us classes of anglicisms or homonyms. On other days, she came with the voice of the military personage Sgt Padró that would teach us imperative forms or what ever other rules of the Spanish language. On occasion she would assume the personality of an absent-minded person and would forget things and whom we would have to remind constantly in old rules, conjugations, classifications, words, dates of assignments, and tests. Now I understand that this was all a means for us all. She would also come disguised as the character of a clown, a mother, a student, a magician, the tourist, among many others, always with an appropriate reason for the theme which that day would be covered in class. Our third grade Spanish class was never boring. In fact, I am sure that it's one of the reasons why we liked going to school.

After reading, discussing, and enjoying the narratives, I corrected grammatical mistakes, accompanied by a group of mentor-peers sharing the task as a collective, in this way the narrative as a product is even more aesthetic. Doing grammatical corrections at the end was like adding more feeling and flow. Given the dominant attention to classic university texts, we sometimes forget the richness and enormous value of narratives and stories that reveal our past as individuals, as students, and as children in development. With the oral word, as Anaida Pascual Morán mentions, there occurs the same expression found in music, painting, sculpture, cinematography, theater, dance, literature, the religiousness of peoples, mythology, and the most modern and subversive genres of comedy, storytelling, puppeteering, and graffiti: we can send messages and communicate meaning; these allow us to interpret and reinterpret historical facts, learn and reflect about ourselves through diverse manifestations. To return to the expressive and to the descriptive is pivotal to analysis; to return to the description is part of the resurgence of education and psychology as art and expressive discourse—as an answer to a society that has privileged technical, deficits, and allegedly “neutral” and “objective” discourse born of an arbitrary, pathologic, patriarchal, and archaic positivism and scientific rationalism (Pascual-Morán, 2004). In counter-position we see the growth of the creative, the testimonial, and the resurgence of the storytellers both professional and popular, or even novices, like students themselves—teachers, armed with their own stories.

Those stories are part of the history of people and remind us the biographical nature of our development, using language as a meaning system and emotions as a hallmark of an experience. I interviewed a very experienced teacher—25 years—Prof. Ada Prahvabat, who chose a funny anecdote as her memorable learning experience as a student. She also expressed the power of the “memento,” which vivid as a film, captures the teacher as a “performer” and how inspirational it was for her :

My English literature teacher was a very hip, happy-go-lucky nun. Sister St. Bonaventure was a typical Irish lady. She loved music, dancing, and making serious situations become light. We all loved her. She had a way to keep our attention in class by doing something funny or silly—so as to “bring us back” to reality, to focus. Once, she started writing on the board and kept going until she ran out of space on the board, so she kept writing in very small print on the wall. Suddenly, as we watched her, our chattering stopped; we looked at each other in disbelief and broke into laughter. She got our attention alright! She reminded me of the “flying nun” kind of TV character.

I have modeled the thinking and strategies of my favorite teacher in my classroom. I like to keep my young students “alive” and motivated. I use whatever-it-takes to make my first

graders understand what I am saying in the target language, Spanish. I sing, dance, I even make funny faces! I also know that using different modalities in my teaching means there is not a “one way” of teaching, as there are different learning styles.

Children’s Literature: Rich and Diverse

Children’s literature represents a rich resource for learning, pleasure, and reflection in the college context. Your children’s literature in a college-level course was at first a risky experience. Today, I have no doubt of its role and possibilities in the future of the professional preparation of teachers. The experience of the genre of biographies in childhood literature in my course development and educational psychology generated much toward the construction of conceptual maps and dialogical networks, of the timelines and analysis that we make of the stories and their possibilities in order to create environments of problematizing and critical learning. In fact, the use of this genre—biographies—with its dynamics presents possibilities to young adults at the university level since the stories of life, of some person in modern or contemporary history, and specifically of persons of Hispanic American or Latin American heritage and Caribbean background, presents various points or hooks from which the students can gain a kind of reflexive experience through a mirror-like exchange of stages of cultural or dynamic cultural development. It is adolescence and youth, an extraordinary stage, that in our classrooms we treat with much criticality, in part due to the negative stigma that has been assigned to this generation of persons by the evolution of traditional psychology. When adolescents receive the support and accompaniment of adults, they develop as beings with character, converting themselves into healthy members of their families and communities and with competencies that they wish to demonstrate to society, as in, for example, their own journeys into the experimentations of their visions and challenges as these play out in the context of their own values. In the daily activities of the classroom, the students have to demonstrate their arguments with respect to adolescence as a stage with more conflicts than any other stage in life, and possibly more challenges. In this debate we discuss aspects of journalism, interviewing of experts, conceptual and research articles, and interviews that the students themselves carry out in order to study the phenomenon, situating themselves as part of the object of study that allows them to construct a sociohistoric model of culture and the self, recognizing the self and each generation as these benefit one another mutually in the context of our cultural heritage that moves forward in giant steps and that pushes forward the ontogenetic development (of being). The progressive and critical educator in first instance recognizes and uses the connection between the knower and the known, the researcher and the research in order to question the conditions that promote injustices—the what, who, and for what or for what purpose education, the why of the contents, and the way of doing it, the practice. The feeling-thinking subject knows that he or she has a connection with the object of study. The professor as a person not only provides information but also promotes human development, that is multi-formed, multidirectional, and historic.

One of the stories most use in my classes is *Arturo and Clementina* by Nela Bosnia y Adela Turín.⁸ The narration tells the story of two young turtles in love that decide to share life. Clementina has many future projects that she would like to undertake and accomplish, but after suffering that many humiliations at the hands of Arturo decides to leave to move forward. On the other hand, Arturo will never come to understand the reasons why Clementina left his side because his points of reference and interpretation remained anchored in paternalistic values that still consume men and women in the twenty-first century. My anecdotes, using this text, do not end: I’ve read this to children, youth, adults, university professors, and the lists of interpretations have no end. I use it in therapeutic psychological sessions and educational workshops since the metaphors provided by the narrations and illustrations allow for the location of various imaginaries from one’s same latitude: power relations among couples, in filial and pedagogical relations; the language of the oppressor; social expectations learned; the emancipation of the spiritual and emotional among others. *Arturo and Clementina* is a very versatile resource for student teachers in part because it confronts them with the necessity of needing to work through children’s literature authentically and honestly, in an effort that supports an education for human rights and equity along gender lines. The stories that I use to deal with themes, such as prostitution, war, homosexuality, oppression, a very honest form, are shallow but beautifully exposed where conflicts join hands with human nature to understand it and free it.

Using the Biography

To do pedagogy is *art-science* which means choosing of strategies and tools of work, revision of literature, pilot studies, doing research in action, or doing action research in order to articulate with our hypotheses, our work and creations. Pedagogical practices are always put to the test—like science and art—because the process is reciprocal, because the groups of students change, because a culture and its artifacts change and that makes the act of educating an unfinished project but just as well equitable and dynamic. That was my experience using the genre of biographies with my students. I called the biographical activities, *Parallels and radians of human development: a workshop using biographies of children’s and youth literature*. As human beings we are biographical beans, even before our birth. There are live memories, writings, photographs, videos, drawings, in more than one family album. The persons that have drawn that human and cultural map throughout the history of humanity are as human as we are. Making use of more than 30 biographies of artists, poets, musicians, scientists, visionaries, emancipators, and athletes, as teachers we made timelines amongst one another to explore the possible parallels and meridians that exist in our own lives in the function of our humanity. The tasks had three parts: a group task—cells of five persons to elaborate a timeline of humanity and as such locate persons by periods or historical movements (e.g., the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, modernism, postmodernism). The second task was a personal individual task: to choose a biography and elaborate upon

the parallels of this person with the life of the student, according to stages of development or significant events. In what way do you seem alike? What stages seem similar? What events were significant? The third task was a general group task whereby all students could make observations about the meridians as a sociocultural group in relation to other biographies. The meridians were the broad observations that we may make of our group in relation to the other biographies. As a group with what personalities do we most identify with in terms of cultural and historic factors? Why? The persons whose biographies we read were Celia Cruz, Roberto Clemente, Jorge Posada, María Santuola, Hellen Keller, Leonardo Da Vinci, Pablo Picasso, César Chávez, Martin Luther King, Malcom X, Nelson Mandela, Rigoberta Menchú, Pablo Casals, Charles Darwin, Rosa Parks, Frida Calo, Gandhi, Diego Rivera, and William Shakespeare among others. All of these workshops—intense—were completed in 2 hours in order to discover how to transport ourselves in time and space to the history time of the personalities/characters, as well as the context where they lived and developed as children and adults. They were able to locate the characters in historic time by reading the text of the biography and the narrated story which also allowed them to contextualize and value the understanding of the historical dimension and complexity of human development. We used other texts—virtual and on paper—in order to locate those persons while practicing the use of the timeline and future teachers. They were able to consult on-line information while practicing the use of the timeline as future teachers. The time limits always represented a real challenge for the activity, from which they established priorities to improve and better work. One semester is much too short for what we wish to accomplish:

Outstanding, the way the teacher explains stages of development, with current examples and doing parallels between the theorists, their lives and the biographies of characters. It is not easy to bring so many resources. We were inspired to experiment with these resources.

The readings and stories that she offers us are very good and always tries to bring different resources to learn more and be both fun class and view other angles. Not always thought so, at the beginning found it inappropriate. . . that we were using children's readings. . .

Problematizing Texts Made for Children: Agenda for Critical Teachers

Children's literature also has been a terrain for doctrination and "stupidification." Its enemies sometimes are publishing houses, editors, illustrators, and authors—some ingenuous, others manipulated—who allow themselves to be used by those opposed to critical pedagogy; that is to say used for the purposes of a domesticating pedagogy that Macedo (1994) called "literacy for stupidification." One of those sad examples came into my hands when I examined, together with my 9-year-old daughter, a biography she had to read. She was reading it for a language arts class; it was a type of biographical text about a woman, intellectual, and powerful, and very influential political figure in Puerto Rico, Felisa Rincón Gautier.⁹ Written in Spanish by a well-known and respected Puerto Rican writer, Magali García Ramis,

but published in the United States in 1995, as a compendium of biographies titled “*A Collection of North American women*” (a strange coupling of a colony converted into a state), where the text describes Puerto Rico’s location as “an island to the southeast of Florida.” For the first time in my life Rico was located outside the Caribbean! A third grader can locate the globe, and its latitude, or for that matter Cuba! Another critical point in the piece was the absence of black children and adults. Not only does the book tell the story and draw part of its life from a person who represents the dominant ideology, but it also undoes or “undraws” and twists the racial and geographical location, which are in essence the elements of differentiation of the Puerto Rican population from that of the United States: our brownness, the Caribbean location of the island (of which I was educated in school), the omission of the two other Puerto Rican islands municipalities—Vieques and Culebra, and identified *Doña Fela* (as commonly named) as “North American.” Obviously, I took the opportunity to present the content of the book to my students, future teachers, as an opportunity for problematizing its content and presentation. I discussed it with my daughter, as well as with her fourth-grade teacher. It provided a good occasion for the teacher to understand how critical her active participation and judgments in curriculum matters and decisions can be with respect to the kinds of books that occupy the shelves of the school library. Examples like these generate the urgency to name the power that teachers have to change materials and texts and to be subversive in a way that validates what they say about constructivism more than just an expression and takes on an authentic character as a praxis. Schools are fundamental for any country; yet it is very difficult to acquire the necessary critical tools (Macedo, 1994) needed to unveil ideology responsibly as it informs curricular choices. Critical praxis needs constant reflection, analysis, and action accompanied by two other ingredients: inconformity and reasonable doubt.

Classroom-on-the-Road: In Motion

My “rolling classroom” was a concept that came to me, or rather, I borrowed from the university’s theater department¹⁰: *teatro rodante*. From its inception, the *Teatro Rodante Universitario* became a popular artistic expression that entertained, educated, and was shared with the most diverse population of the country, from the cities to the deepest countryside. It was the first attempt to free from the metropolitan area the dramatic arts making it accessible to the more marginalized and dispossessed of their country. It was the university’s way of sharing the fruits of its academic environment with a popular classes of the country. And like the university’s *Teatro Rodante* my courses are conceived in such a way that they could be offered in any inhabitable space. The productions were made in such a way that they could be expressed in any scenario—in plazas, parks, on basketball courts, schools, or wherever they may be received.

This concept applied to my strategy of moving my students and myself from the box of four walls of the classroom and instead activating exploration, curiosity, and a synchronization with the broader community that surrounds us. Because

of this I do not only use the concepts to identify a movement in my courses on human development and human psychology, but also in courses of childhood and early childhood evaluations, as well as in the personal human development seminars and reflexive seminars, among others. Pedagogy in e-motion has a practical goal, but has multiple points that converge on the same goal: to explore the surroundings, the community, and the city and other academic scenarios for the purpose of reinventing our vision of them. It has been powered by the necessity of experiencing the society, by living it. For example, a District Court House during an active hearing; the underestimation of the University Museum; a Neonatal Intensive Unit at the University Pediatric Hospital; a Montessori School; the Infants Laboratory and Preschool Centers; the Laboratory Schools; a Birthing and Breastfeeding Center; and other public schools surrounding the campus. All these scenarios became the starting points of debate on current issues in the field of medicine; health care; social, cultural, and educational public policy; economics; and politics. All of these scenarios became open learning scenarios, open for questioning about our development as a country; for critical questioning of ethical and health issues and services; open for questioning of a pseudo-justice system for children with special needs and their families. As Corzo (2008) discussed in his provocative book *Educar es otra cosa (To educate is another thing)*, schools and universities must have teachers who educate about disciplines and those “who provoke education”(p. 28), and to achieve such challenge we must understand that there are many good educators on the streets and communities, we must listen and get provoked; we must talk *with* students, more than talk *to* them because we are beings of relations, intimacy, and history.

Problem-Based Learning: (E)Motion in All Directions

On one occasion, the *aula rodante*—moving classroom—witnessed the class action lawsuit of *Rosa Lydia Vélez v. Department of Education of Puerto Rico*. Being actively involved in the case as an expert witness, I decided that this problem presented my course with pertinent and challenging opportunities a critical examination of special education in the state’s judicial process of issue resolution. Through the problem-based learning strategy, I engaged my students in field experiences that could help them understand their role in forging changes in our educational system. Our students need to be well prepared in issues related to special education given that almost 50% of the children listed for Special Services are in regular classrooms in Puerto Rico. Problem-based learning (PBL) is a student-centered instructional strategy in which students collaboratively solve problems or seek solutions and reflect on their experiences. With the Unit I designed, *Class Action Lawsuit Rosa Lydia Vélez and Its Stipulations: How Government Can Comply*. The exercise was driven by a challenging, open-ended real-society problem; students had to work in small collaborative groups and I served as a mentor and facilitator for materials, key persons of the case, files, etc. Students had choices—depending on the stipulations selected—to move to the courthouse to witness a hearing—for 3 years

hearings were held to revise two to three stipulations, each by hearing for some 14. One of our memorable moments was when Rosa Lydia visited our classroom. Throughout this process, the students developed a profound sense of responsibility, the connections of the material studied to the lived experiences of real people in real time. They enriched their capacity to feel and appreciate the solidarity needed to succeed individually and collectively. They took charge of the entire process and this resulted in a most gratifying experience for all. The following exemplifies what occurred:

A Group Not the Same Thing as a Team

The work on the class action suit was a very rich experience that in the beginning had me terrified. So much information about the case, about special education, about services, the laws. . . In the end, they are real world activities, like this one, that had us apply in our knowledge the knowledge we have learned in class. I did not like the group dynamics since there were five of us but only three attended the meetings. I discovered that the project was difficult as a teen but when we began the research, the work just became group work. The work as a group is not the same as a team. A team is a group of persons that collaborate and work together to accomplish common objectives; and in a group the members work in independent manner. Usually work in groups is characterized by distrust with respect to the motivations of the others in the group. I discovered, I observed that when we began to work together the motivation as a group was not the best. We were there to comply and complete the task at hand but everything was like stressful, very stressful but the objective was: we have to finish this. In the beginning we failed to have more patience and tolerance in the process of developing the project and in our mistrust of the motivations of those of us in the group. We overcame these adversities and upon completing our project, each of us learned to contribute and put our grain of sand into the process that would culminate in the formation of a team. We moved to intensely, from different forms, but in total communication, we went to conferences outside the university context and the metropolitan area, interviewing parents and children with impediments, teachers, and organizing presentations with other resources that proved very useful. It was very fruitful because each activity presented us with different challenges. I know now that I can explain now the case of Rosa Lydia, her contribution, her history, and the services created thanks to her cause, and our humble contribution.

M.P.

When students reflect upon their mistakes with hope, we can say to them and to ourselves “good work”! And yet, it is not through a conference or even a workshop that students will learn to construct knowledge about their capacities of tolerance, patience, understanding, of questioning, and the reflections about themselves and others. This in itself is acceptable, but not necessarily unique nor outstanding. The two lives, meaningful, and real challenging experiences, the threats of what will ultimately be a fine quilt are finally interlaced forming the parts of a truly authentic and meaningful road to be explored. Each team—at the end—had to come up with a solution or proposal for either the parents’ steering committee, this class suit defense team, and for the Department of education team. In higher education, young adults can be involved in real societal problems and issues that can shape their sense of justice, a voluntary work, solidarity, collaborative work, and responsibility of issues. These are the fundamentals for authentic teachers, militants, and organizational leaders in the field who can understand the complex epistemological dynamic between theory and practice.

Tourists on Our Own Campus: Recapturing Lost History

If living is the realization of self in feelings, intelligence, and will—how little live those who reside only in words!

Eugenio María de Hostos, Puerto Rican eighteenth-century philosopher

Everything had begun with the previously explained moving classroom. To be in movement by necessity presented other needs in me and all of us. My own connection with the campus revived many memorable moments and reflections with myself and an awakening within the campus, one characterized by a great sense of livelihood, and effervescence, breathing the vibrant chords of an ebb and flow of the political dynamics that characterizes the campus, the economic crises, and the cultural assaults on our colonized nation. This campus is a part of the public higher education system in Puerto Rico, home to the many aspirations and expectations Puerto Ricans had for over the past 100 years. Many situations move me to take my classrooms to that society “out there,” to touch it, to feel it, and to know that it is not far removed from each of us though we have been artificially extracted or alienated from it even in the presence of our proximity to it being physically on the campus. This interpretation was immediately shared by students who wanted to know more about the university and in doing so realized that such a journey would mark their ignorance and total lack of knowledge about the university campus. This distance is in great part the result of a separation that we have imposed upon ourselves from our history as a colonized people that has been told that there is no need for knowing our own past, our historical memory, and as such, the possibilities that we have for forging our own future.” I remember a song (*Tres Hermanos*) by Cuban songwriter and singer Silvio Rodríguez that I discovered in a 1994 album, which said the following: An older brother went out to discover and forage with his sights set on the horizon, he could not see the stone nor the hole that would make him fall; and so he passed his time stumbling; the other brother went out with his sights set on the ground without being able to see the future; and the youngest brother had one pupil fixed looking up and the other fixed on his step, but this resulted in a gaze that wandered between being and going. So a sight fixed on everything can’t know what it sees.

The fable of the three siblings tells us that all walking has its risks; that even though the path is forged by walking, the walk requires reflection of the immediate past and of the remote past that many times in time robs and undermines clarity.

And this is the terrible path that the colonized so automatically walk upon. To not know their history condemns them to a “dismemoried” life, independent of how many eyes they see from, the risk resides in not reflecting upon the walk, upon the past, upon history. This is why any experience which pretends to educate for hope and freedom must dress itself of patience and tolerance before this “dismemoried” existence. However, in the face of the so-called “dismemory” we have a fundamental responsibility, an ethical obligation as professors: first, recognize that the lack of memory is collective and does not belong only to the generation of students; second, to recognize that the students are key to the university’s institutional culture. The documentation for the walking tour in the campus was important to justify it in the

seminar, as well as to outline any possible path to enjoy it as a personal and political project, which students took with great faith and hope. They believed and confided in the project. We were companions on the walk to a rediscovery of our own history.

I narrated the route, a sort of tour guide with anecdotes and stories about each place, monument or symbol. I was equipped with a brochure produced by the university administration for tourists and visitors and notes from books and papers. The university campus at Río Piedras receives the visit of many tourists mainly because it is the oldest and largest campus within the public higher education system, its architecture and its prestige and tradition. By virtue of the narrative’s flow it was easy to recognize that this piece of literature was prepared for an outsider; but enough interesting to awake the typical young student. The brochure is rich in figures but lacks any references to the university’s long history of resistance to colonial rule and militarism in Puerto Rico. Of course this was just my reading of the brochure, a document that I studied as but a small window of our campus, totally decontextualized from the history of the country, tailor-made for the colony, with no more data than that offered by the official history which has been beat to death by the university, a shameful act: light, uncritical, and an attempt to persuade the reader of its neutrality. In great contrast, Alvarez-Curbelo and Raffucci (2005, p. XII), editors of a book rich with essays about the history of the university, reveal, in the following excerpt, the complexity of the foundation of the country’s first university, founded to perpetuate the dominant ideology and the colonial status quo:

When created by a legislative act (by a colonial and military government), the University of Puerto Rico, the country had barely completed five years under United States tutelage. We were not yet United States citizens and yet even the most ardent annexationists confessed feeling great deception with the Foraker Act. . . . The University was born small with a mission dictated by a colonial models (American, since we are under their dominion) that urgently required teachers and agricultural technicians. The colonizer was not satisfied with the vision of the Creoles whose idea this and perspectives were neglected time and time again by the colonial powers. Throughout those first times the university would have to face the cultural and educational colonialisms that had founded the University, and the University would progressively conform to a liberal version of what it meant to be a university institution. . . [translation by Dr. José Solís].

Clearly, the above statement is not appropriate for a visitor’s brochure, so I took it upon myself to complement that information with a parallel text, more substance loaded, and a fleshy script, if you will. I visited the office of communications to get a brochure for each student, so that they could bear witness to the evidence of how and why to grow accustomed to diluting their own history. Throughout the exercise of university tours with my students, I would also collect oral histories from my colleagues and articles from other sources in order to transform the 3-day tour of the university into a critical and pedagogical moment. We would start with a look at the lobby in the College of Education at the university. The College of Education was in fact the university’s first faculty. We would then complete our tour with a visit to a mural posted on the side of the building occupied by the Puerto Rican Association of University Professors (APPU). The mural portrays the history of police and political repression aimed at professors and students throughout the history of the

campus. The dialogues and questions that arose in the wake of our journey, of the tours, would become a part of our lives well after the students graduated from the university. The “visit to the university from within the university” continued in the quadrangle. We paused in front of the university’s tower to reflect upon the history of Román Baldorioty de Castro, an abolitionist not well known by many persons in Puerto Rico, and for whom a bust-style statue was erected in the plaza in front of the tower. In the quadrangle the buildings were noticeable due to their architectural beauty inspired in the style of the Spanish Renaissance. Their spatial distribution resembles inner courtyards of medieval monasteries. These beautiful buildings are considered a historic monument by the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture and are also registered as United States’ National Historic Landmarks, a fact that promoted discussion about the political relationship of Puerto Rico and the United States in the context of the university’s history. The connection between education, critical reading, and the political nature of pedagogy was clear as our journey deepened. The appreciation of the symbols and spaces of solidarity exemplified throughout the university campus, the celebration and pride come into conflict with the University Tower which bears the name, Franklin D. Roosevelt. In the “rotonda” located at the tower building, sits a circle marked by a series of coats of arms made in bronze, each a symbol of the different sovereign nations of the Americas. Interestingly, the innermost circle is marked by Puerto Rico coat of arms, a symbol of nonsovereign and colonial nation. How can we be expected to celebrate Pan Americanism? Why do these artifacts and buildings seem so distant to us? These and other questions have become our mission; we must construct the spaces and time needed to interrogate them. We were visitors in our own “home.” Most of the students felt that the university was in essence there “House of study,” but they also recognized and felt a distance exacerbated by their own ignorance of the university’s history and its significance. Ivonne Marín, a teacher candidate at that time, shared the following testimony with us. I remember well that she happened to be one of my most mature students and that at the time we were both pregnant; today our daughters are classmates:

I had been for years at the University before my first tour of the campus. I knew nothing about the University, and it was important given that it was the first and main center of higher education in Puerto Rico. I arrived at the University like a blank book and here I have been able to fill the pages, thanks to the knowledge of my history as a Puerto Rican, that remains written on the walls of these buildings; and that I have managed to acquire. Because of that, experience that I had during those two words changed my vision of the University. I now see it as something truly important about what it is, in my perspective is filled with love, admiration, and pride.

Talking Walls, Stories to Tell, Spaces to Explore: The University “Edited”

When I titled the session I was visualizing my street pedagogy and perceived a popular way of going about the university tour, a kind of unofficial version of that which

was far removed from the dominant discourse. I remember developing a discussion about “talking walls.” Talking walls are those murals and paintings on the campus along with their official and unofficial stories and history. The mural *El Exito de la Educación* (Fig. 6.3) (the success of education), adorns the lobby of the university’s College of Education. The artist Roy Kavetsky struggled ceaselessly in his efforts to acquire authorization for the painting of the mural more than 20 years ago. Recently, in 2009, Professor Kavetsky continued his unfinished art project by painting the details he envisioned in the mural decades ago and by establishing a link called The Wall, a web page for students, professors, and employees who want to participate in blogs with essays, comments, and pictorial editions of “the wall.”

Another one of our stops along the tour was the Plaza de Antonia Martínez, a student who during the student strike of 1970 was shot and killed by a police officer. An interesting detail about this spot is that it is located just in front of the University Theatre named Eleanor Roosevelt Theatre. The University Theatre also bears a long history of struggle. Most recently the theater was closed for some 8 years while being remodeled. Those years witnessed many debates with respect to the way the theater would be refurbished, its use, and the administration of all university and nonuniversity activities held in this venue. A considerable number of students,



Fig. 6.3 *El Éxito de la Educación* (The Success of Education) by Roy Kavetsky: university students observing the mural

Fig. 6.4 Mural El Teatro:
Corazón de las Artes, 2006
(*The Theatre: The Heart of
Arts*)



faculty, and university workers engaged in a series of discussions and projects that would educate and ensure that this staple of the university community would not be privatized. And so, in spite of much resistance from the university's administration, and others, in 2006 the Vanguardia Artística Revolucionaria (VAR), in English the Revolutionary Artistic Vanguard, undertook a project like no other before. They painted a 60 × 40' mural commemorating the history and struggles of the University Theatre (Fig. 6.4).

This mural is a representation of the spirit of bricolage crafted by students: many approaches were considered to design and create it such as historical documentation, interviews, sensing current politics, newspaper research, plastic art and photography research. Our journey throughout the campus continued. One after the other, the murals, the buildings, and of course our conversations and dialogs fueled a journey, one that was to be interpreted individually and shared collectively—and most definitely, a practical, critical, and transformational pedagogical experience.

Building “Hyperconscience” Through an Unusual Journey

The journeys of our conscience occur in that time and space of our memory. But we must be careful, for memory is selective which is why we must seize it swiftly

with experiences that obligate us to interpret and go beyond the simplicity of mental tranquility. This is the fertile ground for the “hyperconscience” of Ana Lydia Vega. Upon a review of Street Pedagogy, we learned more of the history of Puerto Rico than in all the other history courses taken. It is here where the hyperconsciousness is inserted. Quoting Puerto Rican writer, Ana Lydia Vega (1994, pp. 45–46) in her essay, *Happiness and University*, we gain a better understanding of how the hyperconscience can be approached and embraced from the perspective of a university student:

some people pass by the University. . . With a mental condom does not give them an opportunity to be infected positively. People for whom culture is simply an accumulation of warehoused facts saved for the purpose of dazzling or dominating strategically. . . True culture has to do with hyper-conscience, that natural outbursts that comes to disturb the mind so that we might define the lazy notion, that remote control of happiness. . . The hyperconscience University obligates us to reformulate, to reinvent the word, to discover a more profound meaning, newer, more generous and the tastier sense of happiness.

For nearly a decade I modified a seminar on personal development and turned it into a space “without time or walls,” where I articulated in the university to her, along with a multitude of activities for human, social, political, and historic development. The notion of times was negotiated so that we might engage in longer lessons during Sundays and without the walls of the classroom because for the most part we spent our university time in the boxes and corners of the campus. The walls that we admired were the works-texts painted within the museum, the student graffiti, the protest messages, the student murals, and many other walls which marked and continue to mark the “broad and universal” space of the university as standard bearers of cultural, political, student, and worker struggles. One of the major accomplishments during those years was rescuing and the culture of a critical reading with the works of Paulo Freire, Lev Vygotsky, Leo Buscalia, Shel Silverstein, and Puerto Ricans like Ana Lydia Vega, Anaida Pascual, Ernesto Ruiz, Roberto Ramos, among others, that work political satire toward an education for peace through poetry and self-knowledge.

I defined the concept of “personal development” as *broad spiritual growth* that includes the historical-cultural development of the individual from which he or she can locate their own personal and collective progress. There is no way that we can develop and grow from a lineal and comfortable optic thinking only in the psychological aspects of “well-being” as a metaphor of comfort, instead we may operate from an optic of a complexity that every individual has to undertake in all of its dimensions: intellectual, physical-sensorial, affective-emotional, cultural, and sociopolitical. Many of the reflexive narratives that some of the students wrote highlighted some places more than others, but they all indicated the difference that they felt after the journey of the two are on the campus. Some evaluations¹¹ of the seminar spoke loudly about the power of the classroom in “e-motion.”

For some of our future teachers, the experience revealed that their participation in the university good become a mediator of their participation in society, wherein they could also assume critical postures and points of view. For example, a point of departure toward the development of that participation might be in gauging in

student government or various student groups, those that are official and “unofficial.” The readings that we did; our tours of the university campus; the interviews with the chancellor, faculty, and student members of the Senate; and the talks, conferences, and many other activities helped to establish the points of discussion, debate, reflection, and synthesis.

Un impacto en mi vida

An Impact on My Life

My university life has not been easy because I have the responsibility of being a mother since I was 18 years old and this occupies most of my time. My lifestyle is completely scheduled and programmed, to be on time always and not fail to anybody. I may be excusing myself as not being connected enough to admire the university; nobody gave me this “campus tour,” not even when I was a first-year student. I felt completely ignorant to what was before my eyes. I tried with great dedication to record all in my mind to never forget. In those moments I thought: Gee, I step by those sites all times, up to two times daily and never noticed them [the buildings, details, etc.]. Perhaps this historical journey helped me to develop an identification with my Alma Mater which I always wanted. I am here, very proud of being at the country’s first center of higher education. This pride not only gives me a recognition but also a responsibility. The responsibility to defend it against those who may want to damage both the structure and what is taught: to think freely, beyond the books.

Although the intention was not to produce guilty feelings, most students raised their guilty voice. . . subsequently; they also blamed others (the curriculum, the faculty, the school system, family, etc.) for not presenting them a whole figure of the university, or at least the opportunity to connect with its spaces. We can feel the voice of the need inside of us, that voice that yearns to speak out. In the context of the above students’ reflection, the metaphor of *recording everything in my mind* presented itself. I sensed in that student an urgency to stop time and regain all that she was experiencing so as not to forget the perceived feelings. Many students lamented not having had more time, or taken more time, to fall in love with their university and its history, which is simultaneously the history of their country. But this is not entirely their fault; we do not contemplate what is ours because we have not been taught to feel a sense of belonging or ownership of our land. This history is not taught in any book or material of the social studies curriculum in private or public schools in Puerto Rico. Our little journeys, for many, became a “reality check” helping our students to understand that the creation of a young adult population that has been “dismemorized” is a terrible blow to their development. To live the spaces where the history of the student movements and workers struggles was forged and upon which it was written, to read with care and critical deliberation the walls and murals that denounced and announced possibilities represented an educational experience that far exceeded my expectations as an educator.

Pedagogy in Movement: Pedagogy in (E)Motion for Real Development

When college students go to class and comply with the basic requirements of their curriculum, they are accomplishing a duty. But when college students walk, inhale, and visit their campus within a cultural and sociohistoric context of a course, this I call *tourism*. The following is a general representation of the reflections of the many students who toured their campus and who, for the first time, felt their campus was alive and rich in its history:

I think we should use methods that challenge the student and at the same time are flexible and that offer all possible approaches for better performance: discussion, application and justification of knowledge, among others. There are no excuses for not doing a good job! Although I started this course with doubt or indecision, I discovered that I was not “stuck”, on the contrary I felt that I was learning. I could move along within disciplines related to psychology, philosophy, assessment and teaching methodology.

I have learned along with my students the importance of calculated risks. With many years of constant reflection, questions, and challenges, I honestly feel that I have transformed my pedagogy and my work as an educator reaching another level of connectivity within my emotions and aspirations. Much of what I have accomplished with my students has been nurtured and made possible thanks to my mistakes without which movement is not possible. Another dimension of this development has been my constant interaction with scholars and practitioners in the fields of psychology and education. I must recount a convincing advice that Paulo Freire shared with us in his book *Education in the City* (1997). Here he reminds us that the progressive educator must demonstrate to his students his or her competency in the material that his ideas and acts are synchronized; that he or she is capable of political clarity when many ignore it or conveniently evade it; that he or she is tolerant to live alongside those that may hold different ideas but with whom together the educator is willing to struggle against the antagonizers. Furthermore, it is not only about being politically clear or more conscientious but also the progressivism resides in the power to stimulate doubt, critique, curiosity, the question, the hunger for risk, and the adventure to create; to continue believing that even those schools are used to reproduce the ideologies of power and the notion that “the world must be that way,” the school also engenders the seeds, as it always has, for diverse forms of resistance and the power of transformational change in society. But beware or better yet, “be aware” of the paternalism with which we engage our students and the false conception that they must “free themselves” of the banking method of education. Transformations and revolutions require “valor,” political clarity, love and affection, and enthusiasm. There is no freedom without discipline. As Peter McLaren¹² postulates, critical pedagogy is not a desired thing; it is a “moral affinity” among people who want to change or alter relations that take revolutionary love or radical love, in Paulo Freire’s words.

The Postmodern Student as a Bricoleur

University students at the public superior education system have long been known for their political and social activism on behalf of a democratic and participative institution. Almost every scholar graduated from the UPR at Río Piedras campus experienced a conflict and a strike at least once in their studies. In my case, it was in 1981, when my historic and pedagogical map changed forever. No other context in Puerto Rico offers students as much opportunities to understand the threads that connect social change, civil participation, governance, theories, and public policy, among others. What Vega (1994) calls “hyperconscience” is what students from the University of PR (UPR) have often learned besides the classic and modern theories and new paradigms of the disciplines.

For sociologists Nieves-Falcón, Cunningham, Rivera, Torres, and Amundaray (1982) there are five important factors that trigger protests at the UPR: (1) country economic tensions, (2) influences and tensions from the political context, (3) institutional problems due to the heterogeneity of its community profile, (4) the generation gap between administrators and students, and (5) lack of real belonging in a “university community” controlled mainly by administrators. The UPR has been the site of protests and strikes since its founding on 1903, the first important protest being in 1948 (Alvarez-Curbelo & Raffucci, 2005; Nieves-Falcón et al., 1982). These factors also trigger a street pedagogy that can combat the neocolonial discourse and governance, moving wills and people to zones of discomfort. The zones of comfort are those linked to pseudo-well-being because it is individualistic, not common; it also relates to the protest-without-proposal stand of view. One can change the inequity not only from the protest and the energy that can generate, or the strong feelings that can produce, but also from the analysis of different forces, contradictions, and complex sociopolitical relations. In this sense the pedagogy in (e)motion stands for the recognition of a collective and individual sacrifice, a creative source of solutions and alternatives combined with rigorous and systematic practices.

The most recent protest events, started on April 2010 that lasted 61 days, positioned this student body and its leaders as very emotional and vinctulated beings whose strategies of struggle and protest are like a mundillo lace: unique, complex, novel, and yet relational. Students reached the status of negotiators having the favor of the majority of the public opinion in a neocolonial country. Students used every tool available to make possible a pedagogical and ideological task. They reinvented the typical strike course of action, with discipline and patience; with love and art; with freshness and movement; with futuristic vision and historic memory, keeping an eye and a foot on *terra firme*. Inside and outside the university campuses, they took advantage of technologies of communication and information (TICs), creating, with no budget, social webs, virtual videos with their messages, and even creating a radio station within the ratio of the Río Piedras campus called Radio HUELGA/STRIKE (radiohuelga.com/wordpress/) which people could reach by Internet. They also carried out a sustainable behavior in every camp they erected: reusing, reducing, and sharing resources at the maximum as well as harvesting in small spaces. Postmodern times call for novel movements connected with the



Fig. 6.5 Students' manifestation in front of the main entrance/strike day 13th

diversity and heterogeneity of the college student and citizen. Against repression, fear, and stubborn arrogance students could address their message with simple honesty, bold intelligence, and articulated thoughts, words, and acts (Fig. 6.5).

The student movement called for a systemic effort to cover the 11 campuses of the public system and achieved the coalition in a cohesive and respectful way. Student organization from the political, academic, social, and religious genre stand of view responded effectively and affectively to the urgency of the conflict mobilizing people around the campuses and inside. The student strike that became a student national movement reached an international resonance among university academics, social and humanitarian associations, syndicates, professional groups, artists, writers, and sport figures. In a colonized country, where the word "national" means for neoliberals and ignorants the same as "socialism or communism," this strike meant a real rupture which moved the inner fibers of our beings. But the HUELGA/STRIKE 2010 required a long-lasting educational and preparatory workshop for UPR activist students of many social and political groups, besides the General Student Council, who were studying and analyzing the institution's financial movements 3 years ago, even before election time. Those movements exploded along with a devastating Public Law of 2009 which declared emergency status and proposed a *Integral Fiscal Plan to Stabilize the Fiscal Economy and to Save Credit*. This is an antisocial bunch of legal measures to cut expenses and neutralized the economical recession based on firing 17,000 employees, reducing and vanishing social, remedial, and educational programs, among other cuts and reductions, putting the burden in all but the foreign capital enterprises or the comfort zone of big tax evaders. This, again, reminds us

educators that the political vein is an open-ended supply for critical pedagogy and post-formal thinking in order to construct a civilization that can survive sustainably with others.

¡Que vivan los estudiantes!

This is the best way to celebrate with words, the students' spirit, which has been problematic for the establishment for decades. The students conducted their 80% of struggle inside the campuses, refusing to abandon their camps and resisting the uncomfortable conditions. Dozens of professors and employees made parallel camps on the fences boarding the campuses along with other labor unions, and social and humanitarian organizations. The student community—from diverse groups, in addition to the Student General Council—underwent a legitimate struggle against the indifference of the government and the university president and the chancellor to consider, discuss, and analyze their proposals, which sought to identify funds and fair alternatives to avoid reductions in services, courses, or labor conditions, given the university's \$300 millions alleged deficit. Although those proposals were almost ignored, and the state repression and defamation was—and will continue to be—outrageous, the students with their constant pressure for dialogue, presented written and audiovisual messages to the country with the clear intention of staying for the records. Their active militancy, with the constant support of professors, university workers and other groups, could stopped most of the sanctions for militant student leaders, the elimination of the Board of Trustees' order to eliminate tuition exemptions for the talented, stop the privatization of any of the campuses of the public system, and the registration fee of \$1,000 (beyond the tuition costs). The final and most important signed agreements were achieved and aided by a court mediator imposed by a judge. It is remarkable to mention that in 5 days of meetings for mediation, the agreements became reality. The 61-day strike and the administrative closing of the university were “unnecessary” given the fact that the students' requests were reasonable.

As university history has showed, the administration and the government tried every resource to silence and interrupt the protests using violence and threats through legal interdicts, media propaganda (costing thousands of dollars), defamation, and criminalization of the students' manifestations. Even worst, we all witnessed the arrogance and public justification for the use of brutality by the police superintendent, the cruel treatment of prohibiting the entrance of food, water, or medical treatment inside the campus and parallel to that, a court interdict to fore-close them from their camps. The struggle had guts and kept our emotions high since the very first day. These conditions triggered an intense and radical love to subvert that chaotic and antidemocratic order.

The defense of the democratic and participative university became a very emotional, radical, and basic movement for a young adult to pursue. In a common goal, given the neoliberal and postcolonial times, we the professors must defend and support our students' aspirations as we defended ours, as a generational duty, sensible and understanding of their historical moment. Historically professors have

defended students to protect their physical integrity and dreams. Students move us to rethink teaching and curriculum and to problematize higher education inserted in history, social inequities, and political context. We also defend the autonomy of our university to reinvent solutions using its wisdom, but without killing its universal spirit, historical memory, and moral reservoir.

Speaking of activism, advocating, and political clarity, Turner Martí (2008), a Cuban professor, researched and analyzed Che Guevara's discourse and actions concluding that:

The process of education in collectivism aimed at accomplishing dedication to a common endeavor presupposes an enrichment of the individual to enable him to make personal decisions, defend his views and realize his interests with deep satisfaction. "...In fostering collectivism, Che delved into the importance of critical analysis among the members of a group, and into the advocacy of our own opinions and the line of arguments required to attain a united action. (p. 26)

Precisely because of the emotional and affective nature of the student's strategies, the inclusion of the personal and collective imaginary, is the huge range of success of this struggle. Leaving aside the commodities of neutrality by envisioning the uncertainties of the utopias and embracing the power of the social justice, collectivism has a recognizable face, which sociologist Nieves-Falcón, an Emeritus Professor of the UPR, addressed brilliantly:

I am walking across the multiple students' camps in Río Piedras. I see people of multiple ideologies. From all religions. From all social classes. They have left aside the traditional ideological boxes, where people use to make reality. In this small cosmos called camp, a participative democracy is been erected; it is hard to implement but not impossible. An alive democracy that transcends the impersonal and charismatic leadership. They are not messiahs. They are partners with a common objective, without looking for protagonism or opportunism. They are people who make concretely possible and tangible the mutual respect; erasing genre, racial and social origin differences for the daily interaction; sacrificing their home comforts in favor of the principles they believe in. (2010, p. 1)

Epilogue

Listening and living the stories, reflections, protests, and anecdotes, I have learned that all sensible educators care for their students as well as for childhood and youth in general, but have to take care of themselves. No one thinks that there is a "Truth." More than likely, uncertainty characterizes our existence, all the more reason to questioning constantly, to understand that we are presented with diverse readings of the world, and as such, diverse negotiations of these. One has to constantly and deliberately revise values, dispositions, and political views. Our mental maps change historically as do our landscape. At times, these changes can be brutal or even devastating, as in the case of struggles and protests, but necessary. The critical and "edited" journeys through the university campus-community as well as nearby public schools and communities remain urgent if we are to maintain our connections to, and forge, our individual and collective history. A powerful educator must

stand upon her/his political position to sustain the optimism that critical pedagogy in e-motion is necessary, opportune, and suitable. Like Schipani's reference to Freire's pedagogy (Schipani & Freire, 1992), pedagogy in (e)motion is pedagogy in movement given its dialectical shifts; it aspires to proclaim the constant movement of emotions to revitalize organic knowledge.

Notes

1. Bricolage—French term for the work of a handy person who uses numerous available tools to complete a task. Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln have recently used the term to describe multimethodological forms of research. Du Bois employed research strategies as varied as historiography, survey research, ethnography, urban mapping, urban ecology, geography, and others in his work *The Philadelphia Negro* in 1899 (Kincheloe, 2004).
2. See Cotto Morales (2004).
3. A print made using a stencil process in which an image or design is superimposed on a very fine mesh screen and printing ink is squeezed onto the printing surface through the area of the screen that is not covered by the stencil.
4. Unidad de Personas y Recursos de Apoyo y Solidaridad created by professors, students, and other university employees in 1997 after the arrest of Dr. José Solís Jordán.
5. The translation would be *teacher-story metaphor*, which is naming a teacher as a story itself. It could be a journey to convert a teacher into a storyteller.
6. I wrote a piece of story about the storyteller-teacher in 1994.
7. Real names in the story were substituted.
8. Story of the Spanish publishing house Lumen in this collection of eight pieces titled *A favor de la Niñas* (On Behalf of Girls or In Favor of Girls), a subversive and contemporary narrative on the relations of love and power, with a happy ending for those who free themselves of oppression.
9. Doña Felisa Rincón de Gautier was an influential member of a the political party that has promoted and maintained the colonial status (Partido Popular Democrático) in Puerto Rico, but was also one of the first and primary important state person of the government, for five terms becoming the Mayor of San Juan, the capital of Puerto Rico.
10. Today one of the major contributions of the drama department at the University of Puerto Rico for the development and diffusion of theater. Created in 1946 by Leopoldo Santiago Lavandero y Rafael Cruz Emeric, Theater on Wheels continued that established by Federico García Lorca with his group La Barraca, adding to the concepts a movie and or rolling stage, an innovative technique where a vehicle to house all aspects of the scenery and necessary implements went open transforming into a three sided stage.
11. Students' commentaries and scores of the evaluation questionnaire are provided to the professors from the Office of Evaluation of the College of Education; this is an evaluation that the professor can request on voluntary basis.
12. In an interview on a newspaper in Argentina, www.pagina12.com.ar, on Tuesday, June 29, 2010.

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Chapter 7

Issues of Trust and Doubt: Constant Movement

Is Spirituality taught in the universities? There is still no school on this, nor it is a main topic, but my professors have achieved doing, they have shown their human fiber (their humanity), with their defects, kindness, and contradictions. There is no other way of teaching than with the heart and spirit. They do not teach, that is a mere detail, they are the class. They are real scientists because they teach what they have experienced in their own lives, not doctrines of men who are lost in the fire, with the wind, and with the time. They teach what you do not forget: to think and to re-think.

Fabio Cristallini, Just graduated, Science teacher

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Trust and Doubt

To trust and doubt is not the same as to trust *or* doubt. It is not optional to move from the doubt to the trust because both positions complement each other; for which one must dare to challenge and to trust. The issues on trust and doubt are always connected like a traveler pendulum between two poles that, because of the world's physical nature, most likely will not stop moving. Fabio—the student—spoke of the spirituality he found in his college professors showing him the human and “complex” side of education, and reflected the complexity of human learning and development. In this chapter, I discuss and share various stories of doubt and trust among educators in training and their mentors, including teachers, administrators, and others. My intention is to represent the complex relationships between the individual who becomes a *vulnerable observer*,¹ capable of interpreting with all its subjectivity, thus making sense of what pedagogy is, while moving dialectically trust and doubt. I use Ruth Behar's concept of “vulnerable observer” (1996) to portray a person who knows and accepts that his/her observations are colored and embroidered with biography and personal history. Quoting critical educator Joe Kincheloe, “*Emotionally committed to their thoughts, post-formal thinkers tap into a passion for knowing that motivates, that extends, that leads them to a union with that which is to be known*” (1993, p. 153). Moreover, as I have stated in [Chapter 3](#), to be moved by passion and emotions is part of the art science making process, which historically can be proven. It is then, when the frontiers between the knower and the object of knowing get embedded in other processing relationships such as doubt and trust.

The pendulum of the pedagogical challenge is for me giving an account of the fine line between trust and doubt. Perhaps Freire and many other critical, post-formal, feminists, and educators such as postmodern ones, also found inspiration for their fighting hope on this metaphor of the restless and alive pendulum that forces you to think dialectically between reflection and practice. The Freirian hope is not to wait without a fight, but to wait with the trust that, by walking, we are getting closer to our utopias and, as these move farther away, they make us walk more. This walk is dialectically complex but not indescribable. Therefore we should not wait nor follow educational recipes, as you write, they end encasing the possibility of development. Educational psychology in its beginnings claimed the false scientific certainty that it could explain linearly the learning and the human development. That same psychology, actually much more aged and refined, founded in its own contradictions and thoughts much farther from the paradigm of complexity and critical pedagogy, gives us today an account of an epistemology that resembles the post-formalism of Kincheloe and Steinberg (1999) and Kincheloe (2004). But there are indeed experiences of success that report on the art science of educating, allowing to articulate practices and to inspire creativity and the questioning of the educator. There are many ingredients that are mixed, remapping the post-formal way of knowing: recognizing interrelations; making meaningful connections; taking risks, challenging assumptions; taking advantage of chance, engagement over disengagement; seeing in new ways, and other. Taking into consideration the role of emotions in human life, thinking is not an isolated act performed by the rational mind only.

Therefore emotions take us to another level of interpretation of the pedagogical situation, moving us to the need for those ingredients that help to draw pathways. As Hinchey (1999) discusses, the more classrooms are viewed as frozen images, lacking of passion and purpose, the more we need to think again about the artificial split between intellect and emotion. The same consideration we need to have for doubting and trusting: both are inseparable of the critical thinking.

Who I Am Informs My Ideas and My Pedagogy

As the Puerto Rican professor Rubal-López has proclaimed, who we are colors our world. The syndrome of the “learned certainty,” a result of the career on academism, many times separates us from the academic honesty and the space to undertake and doubt of what seems sure and stable, irremovable, or perhaps dead. I have somehow always experience the “stage fright,” before any class, workshop, conference; it does not matter how many times I have done this, how well I have prepared myself, or how much energy I would have. It is almost as if I had the obligation to feel vulnerable to understand that I only contribute to education when I expose myself to the scrutiny and criticism. This reminds me of the metaphor from Maestro Performer Yetta Goodman of whom I talked in the first chapter. That stage fright is nothing but feeling vulnerable and at the same time too responsible because “everything goes well.” Stripping ourselves from the obstacles that hold us responsible for everything, when what we really proclaim is the sharing of power and control, even when we are invaded with the doubt that failing means to become better in the development of the potential; when we don’t stop thinking that we are the center of our students’ criticism, there are many emotions of surprise, fear, and mixed joy of sharing with spontaneous and critical beings. To feel vulnerable is correct because I recognize that the fragility and delicate fiber of my being is essential for the humanization of my teaching. To be close to our own humanity is to bring us to our dark and deep prejudices, which in turn are the necessary light of alert to reveal and deal with them. Thus we find or try to find the “truth,” the momentary experience of certainty that momentarily calms doubt and the nonconformity. As Ernesto Sábato quotes in *La resistencia* (2000, p. 68), we teach concepts that seem distant and that attain, in a domestic instruction, our spirit to be subject to the selfishness which can characterize us.

I think that the education we give to children begets evil because it teaches the good as the cornerstone of our education is based on individualism and competition. It generates a lot of confusion to teach Christianity and competition, individualism and the common good, and give long sermons about solidarity which contradicts itself with the unbridled pursuit for individual success for which they are prepared. We need schools that promotes a balance between individual initiative and team work, condemning fierce individualism which seems to be preparing for the grim *Leviatán* de Hobbes when he says that man is the wolf to man.

However, human weakness, the selfishness that Hobbes said that characterizes us, far from caging us, can make us empathetic and dissatisfied idealists in search of windows, doors, and avenues for personal appetite and find ourselves with the

need to live with others. Where Hobbes ends, contemporary spirits are born, such as Vygotsky and Freire discovering a political, historic, and cultural being. But what makes Sábato a current force of cultural reference is his relentless pursuit for answers to profound and transcendent questions that are present in all human life. Text of multiple entries and reflective depths forces us to think ethically and in our existential goals. Let us start from the dehumanized and globalized humanity which proclaims the ideological cloning instead of the debating on ideas. We have been doing the minimum, conforming ourselves to the most comfortable, to what we know, and to shun conflict and differences. The ways in which we are choosing to live—just like we chose governments—generated paradoxical situations as millions of human beings hardly survive sunk in poverty, while humanity reaches very high technological levels. Education is a direct product of this factory, so that street pedagogy (discussed in [Chapter 2](#)) and the pedagogy of solidarity (discussed in [Chapter 9](#)) are twined with the pedagogy in (e)motion. For us, teachers and educators of educators, responsible criticism must be basis of our thinking, because criticism proclaims the opening and the release of knowledge through the questioning. Only when the emotional mind which feeds the human spirit is unleashed, can we create novice ways to know, investigate, communicate, and thus learn that the human possibility resides in the creativity and in the courage to embrace the unknown as a humanized challenge as our inescapable teacher.

I see myself now as a permanent student, not only traveling in the past but a visitor of the present as well. The more I age, the more I know how much I need to discover. As I was not as experienced as I am now, I must mention other mentors in my life, whose wisdom and great experiences in the field of education have always been part of me. My father—retired teacher and school superintendent—used to tell me about the importance of having a formal college preparation in education which I never had, as he conceived it. I was determined to study some science subject such as the world environment and the human mind. My college preparation was in psychology, and yet I had courses in education which captivated me, as well as in human anatomy and kinesiology, geography, economy, and anthropology. I experienced a developmental insertion in political and activist work for the independence of Puerto Rico and human rights. My other formal subjects were performance music—clarinet—and modern and folkloric dance. My informal, subtle, and newly discovered passions are writing and singing narratives to children and the art craft. My journey from a clinical psychologist to a school psychologist had to do intrinsically with my very personal and cultural heritage; one can see the course of a historic-cultural dialectic sequence from the internal to the external—from clinical psychology to school psychology, from the study and exploration of constructor of the mind to the intersection and advocating for classrooms in schools and daily problems of the population with needs and impediments, from the study of behaviors and contingencies to the understanding of the developmental movement in a holistic individual embedded in a political and historical context. I was in my very internal journey of searching the essence of my interest and passions. My personal quilt, my “mandrill” is a vivid example of necessary connections that I had to make for myself in order to understand me and my history. What I always look

for in my classroom, or in whatever space I am with students or colleagues, is this interconnected and hybrid meaning—the connectedness, the quilt created among the students with their history, their freshness, and their youth. “Who I am informs my teaching”; taking the words from Rubal-López (2004:103), there is no doubt of the power of context and its dialectical movements changing the landscape of our lives and pedagogy. The true learning experience, from Fabio’s position, is capable of moving the foundations of spirituality, inspiring the epistemic subject.

Trusting Their Talents and Spirit

I thought my vocation added ingredients to achieve the perfect combination. I decided to enjoy my college experience ... every detail of the process that would lead me to realize myself as a teacher—and I succeeded. Along the way, there were teachers who gave positive energy to my desire of reaching my goal. But often, it was my own enthusiasm and positivism that made my journey richer. When motivation or challenge was not found, I myself would look for ways to maximize my learning process.

Marilia Sharron

Elementary teacher, 2008, 4 years experience

Travel and tours where we become companions of our students are a report on our attitude as progressive educators and visionaries. Pedagogy in (e)motion is a concept for enforcing spiritual and affective human actions, which are basic for problem solving, motivation, and dialectical movement. That kind of *movement* and energy is what many young adults, such as teacher Marilia, portray to me. Marilia was my student in undergraduate level and also my inspiration for many reasons. While some complain about the rain or traffic jams, she would attend classes—without missing—in her scooter, which always had a *Paz for Vieques* little flag flying at the helm or with Lolo, her cane, which would also serve as a handy dustpan. She always presented herself as a complete human being always giving, ready for a debate, undertaking anything. Marilia cannot get rid of the terrible condition she has—she suffers from severe rheumatoid arthritis, having had seven surgeries and three thigh implants—but has stripped herself of attitudinal impediments that would have prevented her from doing an excellent job as a student, becoming a teacher, and doing her Masters in Child Education. Like a pedagogue, anchored in the Freirian hope, she is capable of exchanging the “I cannot” for the “I can, and I will.” Mentioning her is so significant. She was briefly a professor at the Laboratory School of the UPR where she taught in my daughter’s class. There she showed pedagogical skills for innovative and participative teaching. This graduate student taught not only language arts but also other subjects including science and social studies. She taught students what resistance to adversity is, and the wise use of humor; she taught them that differences make us great and augment the opportunities; she taught students to study with enthusiasm. She demonstrated that she did not fear parent’s constructive criticism; she was actually the only teacher that agreed on being evaluated by them.

I firmly believe that our students give us great lessons of humanism, resilience, and hope. Mentioning her is so significant for me because she is the student who knows what must coordinate her goals and motivations. This is why she is able to inspire her students and teachers, and this is the most powerful epistemic weapon; without this, there is no curiosity or questions. Here comes the point when the art of asking “unique questions” or having a problematizing attitude, in Freire’s words, and detect issues never before noticed is what Kincheloe calls, politically dangerous. Putting it in a metaphoric way, educators in e-motion are able to extract, through provocation, the potentialities for questioning and interpretation from the cognitive-emotional privacy of students and personal colleagues. This act must be a gentle invitation, a call for us to see what “there is inside” of students, guided by theories and assumptions that account for the complexity of human beings, and do not see it as an organism to react to the mere information. Beware, though, not only to draw out but also to help cultivate. We do not accomplish anything by removing the seed or throwing away the fruit; we accomplish when we nourish the seed and provide it with the conditions to use its power to bear fruit and leave seeds. And these are of a stock that because of their cultural heritage will be different.

Trusting Themselves as a Collective Solidarian

When the students are our teachers and they do not let us see their possibilities and undertaking disposition, having proclaimed themselves their own managers, managers of their own history. That was the case of a student in his first year from the Faculty of Education who was in the program of Education in Theater. His approach to the technology in communications and information—6 years ago—was that of apathy. I remember that one day, in a very timid way, he told me: “Professor, I do not work with computers, I do not like them, and I don’t understand them”; I asked him: “Do you want to understand them?” He then said: “Well, Professor, it seems I won’t have any option because there is so much technology on the course, that I have been entertaining with drawing from it.” This was a clear challenge and I realized my response had to be honest. “You have the option to work it out, and yes, also to withdraw; but I propose to stay with it, and that I will be there for you as you work this.” When he told me that he wanted to withdraw from the course, the first thing I thought was to turn this into a working situation and a challenge for me. I was not going to allow a student to stop challenging himself and at the same time not to challenge myself. This is why I said: “I will give you all the support you need to have a good semester; however I cannot guarantee you that it will be easy, you will have a lot of work. Will you accept this?”—“How will you support, Professor?” he said. “We will be a collective, everyone will work.” The young man accepted my honest challenge. Then I sought the best resource,—looking within the same context—the classroom, the extended family that we are when we combine and support each other. I placed him with a working group of enthusiastic classmates who had better

digital knowledge than him and understood the tools that were going to use during this course. It was a matter of distance and resistance to technology, clearly of control and power. So what we needed was time to adjust and build a strong team that would offer support and scaffolding, the opportunity to develop his technological skills. It was a great collaboration without any materialism—that allowed to coordinate the “movements and emotions” with the technologies. The classmates were tutors, partners who walked with him along his process of “coordinating and moving himself.” His emotions of resistance and fear were handled and stretched to the pole of action-reflection-practice which allowed the student to experience without fear the possibilities of his learning in group, the development of technological competence, and the pleasant amplification of his participation in class.

But the challenge launched by this student, at the beginning of the course, was just: then why *now* do I have to adjust myself to use technology, what for? It was a major challenge, even when I had stand-by help—the group as cultural and generational reference—it was challenging to question myself of the use of the technologies in the light of our profession and as citizens of a very “globalized” and “departmentalized” world. We were creating metaphors of our relationship with the technological tools and our relationship with our body, our senses, and our relationship with the space. We saw the human creations as tools and languages with signs and symbols which inform us of the impact and the print that we want to leave. As a metaphor, the choreography of the dance, or a drama, which students like him love to read about, study, act in, work in, and put on stage, and that seemed so distant to technology—are really products of our relationship with the surroundings, for being metalized by the culture. Like the devices, which should not be reified as distant from our reality, these artifacts are the products of a cultural work. Such products will change us, transform us. The metaphor that connected with him was precisely this, which helped him to transcend the mere technical reading of the object or tool seeing it as a possible prosthesis of support for the creation and understanding of human nature. Those students, who were most skeptical with the technological tools of the course and its format for their use and management, ended up turning to online forums that according to them, allowed them to expand their comments, not limited in time . . . knowing that these would be read and discussed, becoming more meaningful. The student that did not see himself as competent, was able to accomplish seeing, through the partnership and metaphors, the collective group as a generational reference, a scaffolding engine, that made fears become possibilities. Trust has to do with the powerful liaisons that students develop with each other. Some emergent groups—within the group—were very active in creating their personal and meaningful relationship in other college and community settings, where they contextualize their work as teachers-candidates.

Contrary to what many want to promote, the idea is not to repress the feelings so as to control our emotions or suppress them, but to recognize the strength that is in every emotion. They create a necessary tension and movement, between what is being said and what was silenced, the definitions “by the book” and what we read from the world. Emotions strip reason making it vulnerable to other interpretation.

As Soren Kierkegaard has said (in Kincheloe, 1993, p. 155) “a form of personal knowledge is developed that uses empathetic understanding to move beyond the perception of social life as more than a set of fixed laws.” Anxiety or tension can be invaluable to the growth and can help us to function in difficult situations as a driver for action. We should remember that the strings of a guitar cannot produce sound if not strained. However we must be vigilant not to lose control of our thoughts and emotions in anxiogenic situations that are. Fear, for example, is a test of danger: the act of focusing the mind instead of persisting or persevering in the search for solutions. Perhaps the most visible emotional skills or the most known are: skills to deal with people, empathy, grace, social judgment, and the ability to read social situations. These skills are also part of our emotional intelligence, according to its proponents. They help us interact with others and make the world more workable, social, and hopeful. *“I’ve enjoyed the classes because they generated very interesting discussions with colleagues, giving ideas. I think this was one of the most creative groups I have taken class with.”*

Unconformities: When Doubt Triggers Trust

When trusting university students’ talents to express indignation, their voice to proclaim what they are able to do, we have good lessons of critical thinking, introspection, and interpretation or “reading” of the world. When reading politically the world, they are walking toward another text, yet related to other texts, but differentiated, due to the reading of the sociopolitical connection to administrative decisions and ideology. Trust is triggered when doubt is analyzed and carved up and we find possible ways to interpretation and intervention. It is then when trust is seen and felt to engage and explore. For that reason, to rethink the role of emotion in our pedagogical development is vital in order to maintain the moving fiber of the reasonable doubt, the discontent, and the trust in the collective work. We can stretch and activate the engine for reaching out solutions, novel ideas, consensus, and healthy conflict. This is particularly important when undergraduate or graduate students are doing field experiences. This is also important if we can assure that our efforts in the college spaces are for raising students’ understanding about learners with diverse social and cultural backgrounds, contexts, and abilities.

To take a critical part of the teachers training, we must envision the field experiences as bridges to connect different realities and to provoke unconformities. This is the opposite of promoting utilitarian perspectives, replication of “successful” teaching practice, and uncritical acceptance of the educational status quo because this will serve to further the ideological nature of school practices and processes. By seeing schools as a sort of “cultural laboratory,” available for critique, interpretation, and discussion, students begin to understand both why schools operate the way they do, and who benefits from this method of operation (Beyer, 1984). From these unconformities the educator holds his/her search for clarity. For Javier Omar, being a student in the College of Education, Faculty Eugenio María de Hostos of the Universidad

of Puerto Rico, was something that “*marked me like a ‘carimbo’ sweet and rich. My analogy may sound contradictory, but my university discerning was somewhat foggy, but one thing, I came out a winner.*”

He had the opportunity to identify the naked value of the individual with special needs and this impelled him, together with a group of educators and theater lovers, to make a call in reclamation of this community. *Law 51*, the piece that he writes and directs in his new and young theater company, that takes its name from the law disposition which defends this community, and in his words, “*was the result in particular of one of the most beautiful reflective processes I have ever experienced. To doubt the influence of the University and the College of Education would be unthinkable to me.*” However, having these experiences are important reminders that we are in a changeable world, requiring of young teachers to connect to the past without working in the present and its current challenges, keeping the vision in the trust. Learning through cultural action makes it possible to create and envision contexts for reflective thinking and practices. College students need to connect to their educational roots, interests, and talents as permanent tools so that they can succeed and stay engaged with the object of knowledge. In order to do so, student participation and performance are promoted in multiple areas considered as skills and competencies with which today’s educators are equipped.

The opportunity for students to interact intellectually and emotionally among themselves creates the necessary pedagogical space for sharing successes and failures. In the process, sharing and talking about failures becomes the most interesting scenario about which to speak. Both graduate and undergraduate students come to value their questions concerning their lack of learning with respect to an object of knowledge than the received and correct answers. The by-product of pedagogy of question is that students invariably begin to develop or co-construct their own lessons with the teacher. We value the zones of development of all students; reason for challenging their potential to read the world within the word, using critical elements and discourses, performing action research to explore and question their personal hypothesis constitute spaces where they can critically reflect upon their own development and learning. We also use technology as a means to expand time and spaces frontiers, as well as to enhance expressions, questions, and arguments and develop organized thinking.

When I entered the Faculty of Education, my first encounter with a practicing teacher was in the Growth and Development course. I, who wanted to become a teacher of theater and, simultaneously, to complete requirements to study medicine, I questioned myself if my wish was viable or just a mirage. Through theories of Jean Piaget and Lawrence Kohlberg, this teacher made me see the truth of my business.

According to some students, like Omar, university experiences in courses opened their understanding about the power of pedagogy with content and passion. He created a local company called *Espacio Abierto*, and its objectives are the development of communication among the youth, and the problems affecting our country, such as the domestic violence and the people with especial needs’ rights, as well as to cultivate a sense of belonging to the environment and other topics, promising a healthy

life together. To fulfill the objective of his organization the acting company conducts community workshops, theater experiences, collective projects, forums, talks, publications, and cultural exchange. At the end of his message you can read: “We ask for your cooperation and donation . . .” This is a live project which emerged from his unconformities and desire of doing something concrete to give direction to his pedagogy. He asserts:

A good pedagogy must be accompanied by contemporaneity, validity, accuracy, promptness, and, by what most captivated me, creativity. We are no longer those teachers from childhood, like Eugenio Maria de Hostos says in his book Who presides? (1888). Our responsibility as new educators is that of being a tool and guide for the individual in his search for identity and self-knowledge. The artist, Joseph Beuys tells us that every man is an artist. That is the thought of the new school.” (Omar’s Reflection, p. 1)

Their Unconformities: From the Passivity of Modeling to the Request

We should always assume that all our investment in educating critical students is going to pay off. And the way in which this product is crystallized is precisely when we see that the discontent of young people emerging and producing constructive ruptures. From those constructive seeds evaluation and trial are plotted, bridging thoughts for action. Responsibly and without hypocrisy or fundamentalism, we must also understand the conservative notion that students in their practices are only “observers of good role models, exemplary teachers,” for them to execute. In this short essay, there are two interesting claims on behalf of a student-teacher. One is his claim of responsibility shared by the cooperating school and teacher to accompany him and give opinions on their practice. The other claim is the physical presence to a scenario of great responsibility, the children at the fifth-grade level. By emphasizing the socially constructed nature of schooling, hence the need to make problematic what we take for granted the possibility for alternative action is opened up. In the end, such preparation may serve as a vehicle to question the very ideology of schooling which is usually fostered by more traditional forms of fieldwork, increasing its educative and political salience, as Landon Beyer discussed in an “old” (1984) but still relevant paper. This is the case of a teacher who was very disappointed of her mentor during the last year in practicum.

The first week of my practice my cooperating teacher was absent due to illness; the school asked me during those days to replace her and teach the class. Although there was a substitute teacher at my side helping me, I found myself improvising, because I was never given the plans of the teacher who was absent. My cooperating teacher would leave me alone with the group in the classroom—something that I think is not allowed, but it is customary—and had no feedback if I was doing right and wrong or acceptable. I never observed my cooperating teacher to get ideas and materials for planning my classes. It was not until I demanded my right to observe her work, that then I could decide whether or not to have her as my model, or what I could learn from observing her. On my first evaluation I had to wait over a month to find out my rating, which was several days before my second evaluation. Because of this, there was limited time to evaluate myself and improve the areas indicated

in the first evaluation. She was always very busy with administrative matters, coordinating activities but not in my development as a teacher. They were few the occasions where my cooperating teacher gave me some input of my performance, but even less was the positive reinforcement. In this situation, it is shown how much influence carries the opinion of these teachers, who offer their rooms to train and guide new teachers.
(Lee Ying, February-08)²

The story or narrative of this teacher should enlighten us in several directions. First, when apprentice-teacher students are crying for teachers to have the right to “learn from their mentors”, they are demanding the responsible presence of their mentors along their professional careers. Why a student—competent or not—must claim the example of his mentor? A cascade of emotions ran through the veins of the student as we interviewed her. Those same emotions helped her connect with her disagreements and to claim during the practicum period her right to be heard, to be served. For the young woman finds value in the possibility of sharing the task of teaching children in a live scenario, a reason for her to make her claim. This is the opportunity for projecting and self-criticism, and it only lasts 4½ months! For she could even assume that the experience and expertise of the teacher could inspire her and this, in turn, is an option to the learner: deciding to emulate the best. Furthermore, why we have reproduced in our teacher preparation programs a hierarchy of knowledge and learning where the professor and the school teacher must set an example and model the student in practicum if what we want is for them to assume the role and take control and take charge independently? This is the trap of institutional fundamentalism that the one almost a graduate should not be left alone, yet very conveniently is left alone. We must speak out and be honest: to help a learner is twice a responsibility since autonomy comes to play, the power of leadership must be developed as a teacher through the fair and reliable guidance of another experienced teacher. If we can salvage something of the postmodern thinking is the suspicious latent nonconformity to the paradigms fundamentalists who worship the “certainty of the model.” I call this the dependence to have a good model to emulate, brought on the basis of control, conservatism, and the excessive emphasis on execution. This is the belief of having a bank of talented teachers under the regime of rules without question . . . etc. Traditionally we have associated the notion of development with modernization, in other words, with the progressive movement of structuring, the accumulation of things, the information and even “knowledge” that are used to create boxes of skills and set of sequences already set which they can very well be challenged and transcend. Production, organization, and administration of social life within the processes of technical and technological progress can not be understood only in a movement or one direction. And we also believe that execution is the best show of knowledge, when this has been the product of reproductions unreal, almost mimeographed. Furthermore, to stop and think about the concepts we have and the judgments that produce such assumptions is crucial. That’s where the disagreements can be translated into an engine to work from another epistemology of the “non-modeled.”

This story is the perfect excuse to think in sociopolitical action: the space for possibility through pedagogy from the position of an assertive student who moves from

an object to a subject position. In a pedagogy in e-motion, students call for committed and invigorating mentors. At the same time students' claims help to rescue knowledge and wisdom from the law traps, institutional normative, and school culture. In the end, the guilt shared by the universities and the systems of education that operate almost in parallel worlds that do not intersect intentionally rarely culminate in genuine efforts to outline a shared national agenda in education. Every time you invite a secretary of education to a conference on education at the university—they are almost an exception—it is reiterated and accepted the inability of the system of education—as an abstract entity—to self-government or self-directed, but does not recognize any clear action to operate with sovereignty.

Yet few leaders of normative education refer to their own disabilities as those of their team, so as to understand the sociopolitical phenomenon and challenge it wisely. They rather become entangled in the same wave of violence and institutional imbalances, a spiral that moves like a tornado, always taking everything in its path. The sad thing is that neither the instances in the courts have served to resolve anything. For example, the Suit of the Class of Special Education in Puerto Rico has spent nearly 30 years with an adverse decision to the Department of Education—as a governmental entity—but without summoning any officials. The fines end up being paid by the same taxpayers, the same mistakes continue being committed, arrangements that are only cosmetic, schools with special rooms keep closing, children continue to grow, the authorities continue their short speech of governance and law courts, not assuming accountability. More and more people have lost trust in the justice system because of the germ that resides inside: the practices of law from an impersonal perspective, neoliberal, and almost always dominant, with few exceptions, seek to privilege the same system that has engendered it. The courts are not fair; they apply the “fairness” with the rod as the ideology of dominant values and the exclusive—in the same liberating and critical spirit that encourages students, parents, and educators; it is that the critical education is viewed with suspicion and fear.

“Professional Development”: Under Suspicion

Speaking about values and norms which respond to ideologies of power and fundamentalisms, there is the discourse of professional development. Another story that illustrates the other side of the coin in fundamentalist hypocrisy is the following dialogue, which will help to illustrate what I want to say. There is this professor engulfed in conversation with the principal of a private school, who wants to hire him to offer workshops in professional development:

Professor: I understand that your teachers want to learn how to improve their efficiency in teaching, correct?

Principal: Well, not exactly. What we really want is for the teachers to improve their teaching, but it is not a question of learning, since what they have

to do, they already had workshops on; this is the problem, they do not apply what they already know.

Professor: Do they already know? Wonderful! How do the improvements work after learning them in the workshops?

Principal: They do not put them into practice, that's what I'm saying. They know what they have to do, we have given them curriculum manuals, yet they do not follow the instructions.

Professor: This makes me think that you still don't know how to improve the teaching.

Principal: No, no, you don't understand me. We know perfectly how to do it, the problem is that they do not carry it out; we simply don't succeed for them to apply what they know.

Professor: Then, I reiterate you do not know yet what to do to improve the teaching.

Principal: (Impatient, controlling her anger) Have you heard what I'm telling you? We know exactly what has to be done. The problem and the reason for us calling you are the behavior and attitude of the teachers, who are suppose to apply what they know, but they don't. We simply want you to train them . . .

There is not only an understanding from the school authority represented by the principal, that the teachers have to own everything "taught in the trainings" but that we accuse them of not having the work attitude and capacity to apply what they have learned. Every teacher then, is under the suspicion of not working as he should and that he does not apply what he had been preached. Of course short of calling them disobedient and punishing them. Because the dissatisfaction of many is precisely the starting point of what should be a great dialogue with emotional nuances that move the parts to understand from "the other's" position or the empathy of the "otherness." There is an integral way of reaching to the other. This is to think with emotion and to feel with the logic and reason which every human being has. So when we engulf the other we do it simultaneously with those "two in one" way, only that everyone does it in different proportions and relative intensity to his history and his culture.

On this relationship of partners from various positions, my colleague, eager to understand and not understand the wishes of the director, which was to use him to speak to the teachers with force what they have to do, lost his contract to provide workshops of "development and professional growth." Eugenio María de Hostos not only recognizes and defends the responsibility of the State as "educational" but also his concern is expressed when a teacher is committed for the purpose of reforming, and he warns us about it.

The Puerto Rican philosopher Hostos conceived the reform as an ideological shift from the encyclopedic to the evolutionary. In other words, to have a radical change that would eliminate the memorial vision and static recitative by a

sound education that is participatory, dynamic, and evolutionary. This one is more enthroned in the historic and cultural action. In light of the different knowledge of education—teachers as policy makers, scholars, curriculum designers, etc.—it is urgent to develop a comprehensive perspective which Kincheloe called a meta-epistemological position from which we can identify many other ways of knowing. Ways of knowing and inquiring the world can be found in ethnography, historical research, interpretation, and phenomenology.

Pedagogy of Silence: Much to Doubt About

I had a good dialogue with a former student, who is now a teacher in a suburban area of the United States. She graduated 3 years after being my student assistant during the summer of 2000. She was studying and raising her small daughter, tasks that some brave young women dare to do and I admire. Now she is pursuing a master's degree in education and feels very confident of the education she received in Puerto Rico. From our dialogue two main topics emerged: the power of reflection and the pedagogy of silence.

NZ: How do you plan for all your students and their talents?

GS: One plans to achieve a learning goal, a goal that benefits all students. That's when you decide what kind of assessment you need for specific goal for a given child . . . and you want to give that assessment according to the child's learning style so the child can prove what he/she can do. Authenticity. It is authentic when you know that you carefully planned that for a given child. Through oral discussions or charts you know things from that child and you extract background information. From these one has content that apply in the activities. Since I am in immersion it can open my possibilities. There is our responsibility as teachers to scaffold them to get success. Maybe they don't have a structure, you promote creation of networks within them, the parents receive a letter from me with information of the activities, concepts, and skills that we are covering, the assessment that I am using (projectism, experiments,) and what you expect from them, I give them ideas—direct or indirect—on how they can help them to get the skills (for example, take a nature walk, and see the clouds, get ea picture of them, then label them). I use Homelinks which are another kind of homework.

NZ: How do they work? Can you see real family and community involvement?

GS: I can "see." . . . yes, it's working, and also other members of the family, such as the siblings, get involved with the child. They tell stories about the homework . . . Besides, the richness seen in the communities is extraordinary. For example, bringing to class coins of other countries we can share the history and topics of those countries but sometimes it is also a representation of inequities, and I reflect much on that.

NZ: How do you problematize this in your classroom?

GS: Well, When I studied at the university I reflected each day and to this day I do this at the end of each school day. Without reflecting, there is no improvement. I know that this is good to do. I know it is important that students get to know many things, but they are very young, first graders, and one has to be very careful and diplomatic. I don't feel comfortable enough talking about war and conflict since 9/11. No one is comfortable . . . It has to be like a subtle curriculum agenda, so with the excuse of not bringing more anguish to children much of the hot political and cultural topics are avoided. We have parents very assertive and involved but most of them are not aware of real information being as valuable. On the other hand, we have parents who do not want their children being informed on topics, or material that could be too political.

NZ: When you say they are "young" don't you think this is exactly what the ideology of power is looking for? To make teachers feel that children cannot take this, children need "to be protected," children need to be silenced in their attempts to know more about what we adults are doing and what we think about difficult things. By not doing the discussions we are assuming a position of domination that Freire called *banking pedagogy* because we decide to deposit the values of domination in their minds. By perpetuating beliefs of false peace, false democracy, false pedagogy . . .

GS: I agree with you, but there are many issues I have to consider: the human dimension, the grieving, depression, his emotional readiness. For some children to talk about war and terrorism is to activate their fears. Parents in this case, have much power, because their values matches those of the general community and school, they may feel comfortable with that, so it (school) does not have to deal with the political-cultural issues.

As we see, the pedagogy of silence is a deliberate action to silence possible voices, those young voices that do not worry about asking, or request explanations. Children are much more willing to ask hard questions because they are looking for answers, not rhetorical or compassionate discourses from adults. But unfortunately, this is exactly what children get. I think that one of the things that need to be learned as an educator is to be irreverent to the authoritarian postures that brings and validate the power of excluded ideological knowledge. It is not insensitive to pain, but to accompany in the pain and to support the feelings of spiritual reconstruction is a task that requires great determination because the false values of "protecting paternalistically" oppresses the minors who could really become fighters for social justice.

The political, spiritual, and moral dimensions are often being hidden in the works and research on children. Not being recognized childhood as a carrier of knowledge in these areas, neither as a participatory, though often heard saying that *children are wise and they never lie*. Our talk is full of colloquial expressions and statements, like the one mentioned above, that seem to confirm the potential of children to be

counted, consulted, and respected. The truth is quite the opposite. There are few instances in which educators in formal and informal settings allow to be influenced by the ideas that children bring into the political, spiritual, and moral platform, even though they have much to say and enlighten adults about their understanding the social world. Different scholars, teachers, researchers, and defendants (advocates) have sounded the warning not to underestimate the ability of children to think and express themselves in various media and forums *with their own voice* to issues and events of political, moral, and spiritual nature. I'm inspired and constantly provoked to problematize the three books by Robert Coles, Valerie Polakow, James Garbarino and I am also inspired by the conceptual framework of cultural-historical theory of Lev Vygotsky that has emerged with a set of principles that allow or highlight dimensions almost "invisible" or inconceivable in childhood from formal education.

Mental activity is the result of social learning, the internalization of culture, and social relationships nurtured and transformed by it. Through social interactions, that is, through the relationship with the other and the language and its meanings given in the cultural action, the individual is determined and critical of other individuals, since he is part of one or more human communities that are intertwined and simultaneously differentiated. The mental development is essentially a socio-genetic process from which the biological inheritance offers natural functions that are phylogenetically transformed in social life. The social life of human beings is political in itself since it involves relationships of power, decision making, civil action, the understanding and exercise of laws for social coexistence, and public participation, among others. The higher brain activity internalizes social meanings derived from cultural activities and mediated by signs that have meanings and that are rooted in our emotional brain. Brain activity is always measured with tools and signs that have been created by humans, and they become an extension of their cultural being. The language (in its broad expression) is the main mediator in the formation and development of higher psychological functions. The emotions, and human conceptualizations such as feelings, are central to the thought; thought and emotion is a single and only unit of thought and feeling that imposes levels of control and coordination in the responses of the body allowing to "enlarging" the possibilities of action. An instructional approach which supports the important role of emotions to promote learning and the development must consider issues that nourish the emotional, moral, social, spiritual, aesthetic, and motivational development. Emotions are also a meeting point for understanding our physical, biological, and cultural self.

Through the psychological and educational work that I have done with children, I understand that the protection we must look out for is to avoid damage due to the germ of spiritual, moral, and political expressions and manifestations of children and their possibility to grow believing in their hopes and dreams. Because of the institutional violence, government, and media to which our children are the bait, our conception of protection must be contained within the frame of honesty and not falsehood or double standard values. What I call the defect of being hypocrites—*inherited social status*—focused on the contradictory attitudes and actions of social

institutions. More so, that we do not defend their rights en masse—only some interest groups do so—when the government neglects and closes the schools and stops to provide educational services. Another example is to preach peace and do nothing—do little—to avoid that the U.S. Department of Defense, using as a pretext the No Child Left Behind Law, obtain information of the students in secondary school and have an opportunity for recruitment in the armed forces. We are not outraged when, despite violating the law, the government knows and maintains a breach of its duties with the exceptional children and the judicial system does not summon them. We neither denounce the moral, economic, and civil damages that cause the dependency created by the State. The following quote from Jonathan Kozol’s website is launching a strong message and criticism to the citizens who may feel comfortable in their policy zones of inaction or neutrality. It is a strong criticism to the commodity that brings us to think of ourselves as good citizens, ethical thinkers from the religious practice:

Many of us regard ourselves as mildly liberal or centrist politically, voice fairly pleasant sentiments about our poor children, and contribute money to send poor kids to summer camp, feel benevolent. We’re not Nazis; we’re nice people. We read sophisticated books. We go to church. We go to synagogue. Meanwhile, we put other people’s children into an economic and environmental death zone. We make it hard for them to get out. We strip the place bare of amenities. And we sit back and say to us, “Well, I hope that they don’t kill each other off. But if they do, it’s not my fault.” (in Kozol, 1995; taken from his webpage)

On my experience to the irreverence—that allows you to liberate the silence—I always have excellent students who help me with their unconformity in the art of being irreverent, when they confront me in front of everyone with very genuine affirmations and arguments in their criticism. And that momentum is the key to confront me with the best part of teaching: when you have to make a turning point in your practice and ideology to avoid falling into the trap of certainty. When I started researching, it was these girls I chose as co-workers, young people with strong convictions who were not afraid to show their beliefs and teaching practices even when these were different to the many taught to them. The irreverence in the sense of wise impertinence is probably the standpoint to eradicate the pedagogy of silence.

To conclude this section, I want to provide an example which illustrates the principle that should guide us to doubt the “protector and complicit silence” that institutions subject students. I would like to talk about first grader in the same school as the Suburban I had mentioned earlier, who gave his teacher, a week before the U.S. elections in 2008, a great lesson in civics and emerging activism and perhaps an openness to undertake a post-formal thinking that would challenge the proposed “protectors” of childhood. The teacher says to her students: “Today we are going to vote. We made two different baskets from which you have to choose an activity to do in groups . . .” Once the activity finished, she heard a student asking, “Okay, Mrs. Prabhavat, we finished The Game of voting. . . . Now, can we vote for Obama?” Political sensitivity is a powerful sign of the possibility in childhood. Not necessarily will it draw political leaders and activists of the schools as we operate these

days, but we cannot blind ourselves to the possibility that they are, despite the system. It is up to us to seize those seeds and grow them in the deep conviction that it is ethical.

Mail Solidarity: Trust Our E-motion

Being at the vanguard does not mean marching in the front with flags flying, singing and shouting without worrying if others follow. It consists of [...] generously preparing the roads and bridges, breaking boldly the bonds of tradition and selfishness [...].

Elise Freinet, 1983:290

My colleague Dr. Enid Figueroa was a key person to this project. To move ourselves toward pedagogies of silence and lies is a heroic and imperative act of knowing. Freire, in his letters to those who seek to educate, ties us to the concept of radical solidarity and love. I had students who took to work the emotions and interpretations of children after the events that marked the September 11—9/11—changed forever the United States and the world. It had a lukewarm start; the university students did not know how to approach the subject: from the perspective of cognitive therapy or from the emotion-pedagogical perspective. With great courage and hope, these young, second-year university students acknowledged that the topic had many dimensions that could be approached from a supportive, thoughtful criticism that is spiritual, creative, and healing. They chose the emotion-teaching. They began with the thought of connecting solidarity students with students that were hurt, confused, angry, and with many fears. The discussions in the classroom unveiled the different faces of the same problem. So the final draft should be called as the title of this section. As a project is an endless undertaking, with many windows open to continue educating for peace, justice, and make of education problematizing. Nothing pretentious, the project was very simple: creating a pedagogy of solidarity through the exchange of letters written by conventional and electronic mail between children of Puerto Rico's northern metropolitan area and schoolchildren from the city of New York. Correspondence sent and received were original postcards made by Puerto Rican children letting know their feelings of grief and accompanying in the feelings of solidarity with the grief and mourning of the other kids.

In the context of the human development course, we challenge the information that, without a doubt, was constantly flowing everywhere with only one message: that grief and revenge. We had to look at the root causes of hatred and at the discord among nations, between cultures, and recognize that to open to diversity is a required task in a globalized world. With the events of September 11 in New York, I immediately got in touch with Dr. Enid Figueroa, director of *Proyecto de Orilla a Orilla* to provide guidance to the students who undertook the field experience focusing on the dimensions of emphatic thinking, spiritual, and children policy. The students found a group of students in Puerto Rico who were to correspond with the group of students from New York, thanks to the "Shore to Shore Program," or "*De*

Orilla a Orilla” (in Spanish). This was an international teacher-researched project that was focused on documenting promising classroom practices for intercultural learning over global learning networks. Since 1985, Orillas has employed modern telecommunications to promote and extend an educational networking model first developed by the French educators Cèlestin and Elise Freinet in 1924. Inspired on Freinet, Orillas is a student-to-student project and it turned out to be a great experience for the two students who led the initiative.

The idea of the letters helped to work from the emotion and solidarity, the theme of war, the politics, and the spiritual dimension and the politics of children with the university students, and to be open to the understanding of children’s minds in situations to the tipping point. This did not mean to silence informatics; the doubt, the anger, and the grief that many were feeling with all the forces of their being, but rather intended to open a communicative bridge among others; knowing that this reality exists—relatively distanced—they needed to stretch human links between tragedies and politics. Not to lose sight of the world is broader than our backyard, and that the possibility of launching is an important germ in the elementary education. After working the issue with the three university students who visited the church, the Puerto Rican kids sent their letters of solidarity, with messages of hope. A space was made available for kids aged 6–12 who, like everyone else in the world, saw the news on television, but probably had little time and space to discuss the incident in the school, or perhaps it was done educating with the pedagogy of silence. So the university decided to “move their classroom” into the community’s Church, where, of course, they managed to have the Pastor and the congregation give them access and entry, space, and material aid. The university students tried to enter the school, but found it impossible due to the secrecy that was created after the disastrous events that occurred in the Twin Towers and the fear of talking about issues like terrorism, political, and economic conflicts between nations, of pain and death. There were also messages of hope, and strength to the children and their families, in English, mostly in Spanish. The children of the U.S. metropolis amicably replied thanking.

Mail solidarity was, as a life project for the students, an unfinished work, with many windows to be open to continue educating for peace and justice, making education problematizing. In the context of our Human Development course we work these dialogues: challenge the information, look at the deep-rooted hatred and discord among nations, inequality, and the political dimensions of childhood. To watch children in action, making “text” with their pictures and their expressions, talking about real events, is what suggest Vivian Paley, Yetta Goodman, Robert Coles, Eleanor Duckworth, and others, trying to see the world with informed children’s eyes.

Trust Busters: “The Law for the Least Effort”

Students show us openly their unconformities and their decisions based on their transactions and dynamics with the teachers. When their decisions are based on the

principle of least effort, we need to ask ourselves why that choice: why that option. Precisely because of what shows up as an option in the teachers' showcase, the students assume their positions. Recently, while I was in the elevator of the College of Education building, I could not avoid listening to a conversation between two students. I called this vignette *The law for the least effort* in our journey to articulate small democracies. One of these students was really upset because her professor allegedly did not read the report she handed in. She did not see any mark or comment on her paper, a reason why she speedily graded much of the papers. She was not surprised of the good grade; actually she was congratulated by her professor who said "You did good . . . I liked the way you put the documents in the portfolio . . ." Her friend looked at her and asked why she was so upset if she got good comments. The other student said that she knew that her work was not read comprehensively because she knew it was not an outstanding work, that she had some doubts and wanted to receive feedback. The professor limited her comments to the student's organization skills of her documents and not for her written analysis. Her friend immediately said: "I know what you say, I felt the same with this professor . . . it is like she finds everything ok, and that's not enough. After all the work!!!" I was really pleased by hearing this conversation and noticed the ethics involved in the students' disappointment and unconformity. Here is when you stop thinking in automatic drive and stop to think and rethink what you are doing with courses that accommodate 25 students. However, the story did have another layer, because as we were approaching the ground floor, the same "disappointed" student said:

-“And you know, I was really stupid! . . . I know this person was not reading the papers or homework, and when she asked me if I had handed the questions from the last class, I responded ‘no.’ You know, it was really stupid, I was a fool!”

At this point I could not resist the temptation to respond, and I said: You weren't a fool, you were honest! They both stared at me and laughed, saying: “Yes, but what difference did it make?” The doors of the elevator opened . . . a loud silence reigned . . . , . . . we all left as I kept thinking in what my next line will be . . . I went speechless and in pain.

If we all accept the principle of least effort, we would stop, there would be movement of new ideas, radical, or absurd; there would be no reason to spark passion. But heterogeneous communities could generate more intense discussions, the possibility for reinvention and re-thought leading to more representative consensus, relationships, affirmative behaviors in solidarity that stir the human tissue. My classrooms were heterogeneous: where time and space converge the beginning student with others more experienced: some with different curricula, different faculties, some very young—17 years and others of my age, 46 years, some married, some singles, a militant socialist political group, and other nonmilitant. The classrooms are small spaces with great potential. Especially because it allows a large group of students and their teachers have advanced deep dialogical discussion. Will they be more than products, and evidence of a cultural heritage of generations touched by sensible criticism?

I think the reinvention liberated and courageous is not restrained with the neoliberal systems where they live, but rather, they serve as conscience and moral

reservations. In this direction we must acknowledge the power of personal relationships between students and teachers in and outside the classroom and its potential in terms of cultural and political activity. These actions mediated by the emotions and the deep conviction of being represent a direction of independence. It takes much time and work to rethink; it takes more time to avail oneself to do the job, and is almost a quixotic implementation. Let's look at the social organization of our surroundings and the interpretations we make of it. In the interaction with others, we make ourselves more human. We recognize our way of life, our codes of communication, and our coexistence. We are also more aware of the different interpretations and readings of the world. The principle of least effort and condescension lead to spiritual death.

Trusting Participation and Struggle

I was always the student who anxiously searched for conciliation, peace, and harmony. None of this is wrong, but suspicious of assuming too much responsibility and the terrible tension that forces you to move. This is part of the entrapment for the *certainty learned* which makes you think that the conflict is the enemy of peace, hope, and coexistence. There will be no state of peace without the equilibrium that we have to create to live collectively. I think that learning to be irreverent, with the established power and questioning what it has always been done in the same way, in honest tone, not made up, has been a process. The areas that the institutionalization wants to take away from their honest expression, with rage and force, are the same areas that many generations have been calling for, either through student councils or through other nonofficial organizations equally genuine. For teachers inserted in a conservative community which deposits its aspirations in them the continuity of those values, the task of problematizing is a very political issue and dangerous, to the point of jeopardizing their positions in the system. No teacher preparation program has its goal or mission to create irreverent teachers, and it is, therefore, no doubt that what we prepare is an applied professional, equipped with skills and interesting curriculum ideas that will have to adhere and align themselves to the mainstreaming, but never question it.

Many of the students who have been successful in careers with good experiences and undertaken various participatory work scenarios claim that the most memorable role of their journey was through university:

There are few things I would change in my preparation at the university. I really liked those situations where my role as a student was participatory. In addition to generating commitment, it created a sense of satisfaction that allowed me to be sure that the next task could be accomplished, no matter how difficult it may have been.

Vanesa Aponte, preschool and elementary teacher

For this former pupil, becoming a part of the process was the key to success. Being active as a student is important, not merely having energy and enthusiasm.

Energy is not enough, but it helps. Energy must be accompanied by values and principles, and participation, as well as struggle, makes two components needed to transcend. Either participating in challenges and generating new questions or participating as an active voice is a critical position that redefines the role of the students. According to the constructivism paradigm, which places the subject as political and paves the way for the formation of new leaders, students cannot be conformists. Students and teachers committed to their epistemological curiosity perceive a socially constructed world and challenge the forces that have given rise to such construction since they recognize that they were not part of the established conventions, therefore have the ethical obligation to challenging them.

This was the case of my former pupil, Eileen González, a student activist who challenged the university authorities and the Department of Education to halt unilateral decisions that degraded the teaching and future teachers.

- Zambrana: How was the fight against the dispositions of the Department of Education to significantly raise the passing grade in the test for the Teacher Certification and require that students of Fine Arts, Health, and Special Education had to take tests in both Elementary and Secondary levels, without having been prepared for these? González: I was in a statistics course when the teacher asked if we knew of the new guidelines of the DE, immediately we discussed the negative implications of this in students from different programs and I left class and headed to talk to the deans. They claimed to be surprised . . . and suggested for me to write a letter on behalf of myself . . .
- Zambrana: They suggested you make a personal letter, but management and the School are committed to make some approach to the DE?
- González: Well, I think they did not perceive my speed, my intensity, and fury that I was going to have for this to be resolved, but, yes, at first they gave me their support. The next day I arrived with my personal letter, that is, from my behalf, and a letter from the Special Ed students at 8 am at the office of the Dean Molina and she immediately read it, found it excellent endorsing it and signing it. At that time presided over the Council for Exceptional Children, but it was not a struggle of the EEC, it was the struggle of the students in Puerto Rico. At the end . . . we got 900. That first day, we went to see Dr. Aragunde, (Secretary of Education). In those days teachers were conducting a protest . . .
- Zambrana: February 2007, the strike, the teachers, represented by the Teachers' Federation, calling for the negotiation of the agreement that was paralyzed for 30 months.
- González: . . . And the Secretary was meeting with the leader of the FMPR. We definitely were placed in second place, in the background, altogether. We spoke with an assistant who assured us that this letter was in the hands of the university since November last year; that he had to

prepare us to make the pertinent changes and prepare us in terms of the areas of curriculum content to take both exams. But at the same time, as I started, you see, talking about emotions . . . I crumbled and cried and was disappointed. Because I had established a rapport with the dean of students and knowing that they knew in advance of this communication. . . . I wasted no time, and at 4 p.m., I saw the deans and told them: “I am disappointed.” It was then that they had to give me all the explanations.

Zambrana: It seems that was the decisive moment to trust your leadership and the struggle. The result of expressing your outrage boldly led them to realize that you had an ethical and moral commitment to yourself. Did you recover your faith in the leaders of the Faculty? So the DE had hidden the truth about communications and their real intention was to impose the guidelines without consultations.

González: I found out that the university was diligent in raising their objections to the measures. Everybody went to task immediately and we all call different private universities. And an immediate meeting was called here, at the School, and even representatives of the University System of Puerto Rico in other villages came. Students did call chains and dozens of students in the School called the College Board that decided not to answer the phone. There were many calls and they did not know what to say, because as a College Board, they did not know. How do I solve this problem? Again, the emotions took over me. The College Board’s offices are in the Popular Center in Hato Rey and my dad works at Banco Popular in Hato Rey. So I had to call from the university and told my father: you will get on the elevator now and you will give your cell phone to the secretary of the College Board, and so he did. He handed the phone to the secretary and I identified myself from the Faculty of Education at the office of the Dean of Student Affairs, telling saying: “I had been for over three hours trying to communicate with you.” I was informed in a bad tone of voice, “I’m going to communicate you [very angry], the principal. Finally the dean and the director of the College Board began to converse. And indeed there was a communication problem and they did not know what they were going to do.

Zambrana: It seems part of an action movie, where the cunning and assume protagonist use his smart thinking to come up quickly with solutions or possible solutions to the barrier. Your emotions will help stretch your chances But at the same time, notice they have the exam scheduled for the same time on the same day.

González: I think the best way to identify if your emotions are taking over you in a positive or negative way is by getting out of the story and saying ok, if I had nothing to do with this . . . If I were a stranger listening to the story and do what I did. And the answer is no. The answer is no

and I know that I will live in March next year; I know I'll live because this problem was resolved for a year. For only one year and then next year . . .

Zambrana: You compare, you talk and reflect, traveling in various directions cognitively-emotional. But are you aware that it is only an amnesty, having temporary character?

González: I know, is about to explode again and you know what will happen, the Faculty will not have the excuse that they did not know. By then, there will be students that know what I did, that they can do it too, and it is their duty to do so. Because it's written in black and white, the intention to continue fighting; there are the meetings we had, there are many signatures, that it was discussed even in the Students' General Assembly, here in the theater. You know, that there will be a problem and if there isn't someone passionate and affected by emotions, as it happened to me last year, they will take both tests, there are going to be lots of students affected. Our programs are being shaped by federal law, the NCLB, and the higher qualifying teachers of statute II. And there must be space for questioning this.

The doubt is absolutely necessary to survive and develop in a system that imposes public policy, no matter what country or culture we are from. This is another unfortunate chapter of one of the issues in dispute in the concept of "high qualified teachers". Besides being contained in various parts of the Act, it is an educational policy in Part II which provides that, for the 2005–2006 school year, schools must have teachers (as) highly qualified in classrooms in which they teach academic subjects that are central to the curriculum. The qualification of teachers (as) is linked to possession of certification and licensing by (as) educators (as). When you try to control the autonomy of teachers, school systems increase the regulatory processes of teaching through revalidation and certification processes. Of course, all the possible regulation does not guarantee quality, and more assessments are not equivalent to higher AYPs. You can still have a mediocre education system with all the regulation and possible assessments. One thing we are sure that, while gaining ground in regulatory practices, the business of workshops by private corporations will increase, and not the teachers. It is therefore, dramas like the cartoon of the director and teacher. Certainly there are many empty spaces or what I call *the trap of professional development*, which was discussed previously.

Trusting Social and Emotional Interconnections

So I try to see the broad picture of its possibilities, as educators or professional related to education. I had them involved in social, community, and politics such as Amnesty International, the Project Educating for Liberty, Class Litigation, the struggles of lactation in PR, the struggle for independence and the political prisoners, Human Rights and Convención, the struggles of students . . . to never forget

their value as responsible human beings to take courageous positions in any location they happened to be. Promoting learning for the communication, for the development of logical thinking, I seek for them to learn to accept themselves, to value themselves, to understand what they have lived, to find its meaning, as a path that leads them to affirm a civic behavior addressing those others, violent and authoritarians, who do not build a democratic life, or brotherhood of peace. Recalling the concept of mediation by the Chilean teacher, Labarrère, this is an attitude of support and solidarity with others to be undertaken in a world of uncertainties, but of many possibilities. My students always have given me moments of great gratitude and hope in my career as an educator, with their presence, their professional projects, and in their letters and messages. This is a letter left under the door of my office by a former student, a lawyer by profession:

Greetings! You may not remember me. I was your student back ten years ago. I hope you are doing great! I am writing to thank you so much for all that I learned from you, not just in the academic or professional, but the things that sensitize us and make a person a good citizen for humanity. I still keep the shirt of Amnesty International's, remember? Well, I passed by my second home, but I could not coordinate with you. I will say that you are an essential part of who I am will be for a lifetime, and can not find words to express my gratitude. I graduated from law here in the UPR, to ensure the welfare of those who need me, with the sensitivity that you taught us to have. Thank you for being part of, what being a dream, finally became a reality.

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Similarly, there is the case of Mabel, a psychology master. A graduate, she had already been exposed to many of the theories and course content taught in the class, being a psychology major, and studied some of the works and authors of educational psychology. But throughout this and other courses, she was exposed to the fact that the educational experience is made up not only of the professor or person that facilitates the course content, but also of the students, the educational techniques being used, the classroom in which they are being taught, etc. Every educational experience, any course taken, good or bad, helps build an idea of what is education and gives us criteria to build up our judgment on what we consider a good learning/teaching process or a bad one.

The courses I had in the Colleges of Education, particularly with politics positioned the professor, helped me see education and psychology in a different light. That particular semester was tensed due to a student strike in our university. The University of Puerto Rico had a student strike on the eleven campuses that make up our institution. It's interesting that the question being answered, in one way or another, is directed to the questioning of education and psychology because the strike that took place during that semester was somewhat related to this particular subject. The strike that took place was mainly directed against raising the tuition and other student fees. But, the student body argued that this wasn't necessary; they argued that the university's administration had other interests and were spending money on unnecessary purposes. These types of arguments questioned *what is* the main purpose for the university? Isn't it education? What exactly is then, education? Who was right? These were some of the questions that the professor took the liberty of discussing inside the classroom during the weeks and months before the strike. Being in a class filled with students in the Faculty of Education and some of the students being part of the student council, the professor gave us space to express our ideas and we found ourselves

in amidst the classic theories of education, psychology and learning, studying, thinking and rethinking what all of these concepts meant. A few months before the strike, which lasted for about a month and a half, I remember that during that particular semester the Puerto Rican Congress for Research in Education took place. All activities and conferences took place precisely at the Faculty of Education. Student participation and attendance to the different workshops, debates, and conferences were encouraged; most of the speakers were from different institutions from around the world and were well known. It was a wonderful learning experience. Once again, being encouraged by the professor to attend these types of activities opened up my mind to many issues related to education and psychology from around the world. The professor also gave us space to interact in electronic chats, discussion boards, and forums with other classmates to continue discussing the different subjects brought up during the activities. Some of the central aspects brought up by the speakers at the conferences were the controversial No Child Left Behind Act and other issues like economic struggles challenge or affect education. Once again we were rethinking and changing the way we perceive and think of education.

All of these activities certainly formed part of her building blocks experiences in the course and certainly helped her to rethink and reestablish her judgment and opinion of what I think a learning experience, a learning process is, and what it is ought to be. She was pleased to see other young adults preparing themselves to be progressive teachers, a completely different view of what she had; young people who came to understand that education should be a process, and just as the great pedagogue Freire said, and just like the professor emphasized, it should be an active process, dialogical, and filled with problematization. Mabel reflected about her participation in the course and how the context and movement of it were a rich context for her personal interrogation:

Other experiences, like for example, a collaborative test in the classroom, different forms of evaluation and assessment, participating on personal interviews or via web conferences, helped me also understand that there are many ways a *person* can teach. I stress the word person because the class was definitely a learning process in which I learned not only from the professor, interviews and speakers but also from my classmates and the way class participation and presentations were given. As a psychology major I learned to look deeper into social structures and phenomenon, about cognitive processes, learning disabilities, and the complexity of the mind; how culture and context constitute us as different human beings. I had already been taught to question and rethink psychology, but it was in this particular class I learned about rethinking education and psychology together. I learned that a good learning experience or process is filled with complex situations and particularly, I learned that a good teaching/learning process must consider and take advantage of the particular situations and experiences involving the students and teachers. A few years have passed since I graduated college. I am now a graduate student at the psychology department, specifically an academic and research psychology major. Many of my classes are related to teaching and learning processes and my experiences at the Faculty of Education has been really useful. I had the opportunity of teaching a course on introductory psychology to bachelor's degree students and I have been able to understand and apply many of the things I gained from my experiences studying psychology as well as education. I realized even more the need of teaching and learning, being a mutual and/or dialogical process. I also came to understand the need of evaluating, assessment and being considerate to the different types of learning, different cultures, context and needs.

Not a Teacher! A Good Reason to Quit

I've always dialogued with my students about the wrong reasons to be a teacher, based on Paulo Freire's book *Teachers as cultural workers: Letters to those who dare to teach* which we enjoyably read in a course seminar. Since I engaged in many dialogues and discussions about the challenges and gratifications of being a teacher in the classroom and an educator at large, deep confusion regarding the genuine reasons to choose the profession always came up to the floor. Moments like these repeat themselves semester by semester in all of my courses, seminars, and symposiums: the debate of vocation vs pragmatism and the heated discussions between the idealists and the pragmatics. When I began to discuss one of the Freire's letters, the third, *I came into the Teacher Training Program Because I had No Other Options*, a different atmosphere, was transpired.

When they reread their stories of how they decided to be a teacher, dozens of memories were trapped in a same theme: *I loved to play with my doll; I taught my neighbors and cousins, no one was saved from being my student; and, I loved to work with papers. I love children; I was born to teach others and to help them.* I have to say that it would be very rude if we just take these stories to attack or make sarcasm out of them. It is a vivid reflection of our socialization process having these stories which are framed in an ideology of a didactic tradition of "demonstrating and depositing things in them," instead bringing the time, space, and respect to these students to hear each other make a difference. As they were narrating their "stories" others just listened and silenced their voices. For a moment I invited those whose stories were the opposite, who never thought in being a teacher. They were realizing that they were reproducing memories of what they understood in rituals and scenes and expectations of the Puerto Rican society for most women. Even in the twenty-first century, no male reported any history related to his childhood and teaching others. Continuing to weigh the script that socializes them to hope for other professions other than teaching, or even if they had the stories, yet not told until toward the end, when they say that after trying a career in science or another discipline, they realized that they were good at teaching their classmates and even worked in the teacher's assistant's jurisdiction. But, who am I to question that vocation? I am here to say, well, I don't love all children and this is a very honest statement to be proud of! It is a myth to say that we must love all children or all people to be a great educator! I am more interested in knowing what makes those students so passionate and in love with their decisions, even though they may have been raised from romantic memories. I am more interested in knowing what makes them so convinced that they can change things and transform, because if we do not allow them to dream of a better world, they would have never questioned why we need a better world, in the first place, and why they think that education is the key. These stories are part of our discussions in teacher preparation courses because "I appreciate the importance of talking *with* students and not *to* students," says Freire. The dialogue from the play is being fundamental to our intimate questions and disagreements that almost never are a topic of study.

Doubt and trust come in a form of constant questioning; goals, aspirations, dreams, projects, worries, and at the end of the road the majority realized that being a reformer must accompany risks, political positioning, and ideology. A more honest dialogue was initiated and much more reflections were out of the box. As a process-product of these discussions, some students came to my office to consult their doubts and questioning their original purposes with education. Most of them realized that solidarity is a must, and that active participation in laborer issues is completely necessary, although some admit their immaturity in projecting their voices. Here it is the conversation about professional groups and unions and the necessity of knowing the history of our country and others regarding this hot topic.

Good teacher-candidates at the end of their training were initiating another career in law school with the goal of specializing in special education cases. Others recognized that to be in charge of classrooms was a challenge that they could not take, rather decided to open other windows to work with children with disabilities and their families as speech pathologist, lawyers, counselors, psychologists, and epidemiologists. This is a real story: While I was receiving physical therapy—in the form of heat stimulation and massages, which were very gratifying—in my right hand due to a tendonitis and intense pain, in the middle of the treatment, another assistant came to consult something with my therapist. That person was a former student of one of my courses who immediately recognized and saluted me. “Professor Zambrana, you were my professor . . . a many years ago, 6 to be exact . . .” I did not finish Education . . . I changed to physical therapy and . . . I said: This is done by walking . . . It’s great feeling good with what you do . . . that worth something, to discuss both the issue of not following the profession for the wrong reasons: either you think you cannot do another career, or is it because this is safe or there is nothing more in the “box” for me.

From the beginning I always paid attention to the area of science and mathematics; this is complemented by the fact that, in some ways, I like to teach others what I know; I understand, and I know that made me think that somehow I could be a teacher. But that is not all it takes to be a teacher. Definitely, I feel comfortable and in fact, I have to apply teaching strategies to reach people . . . I have to train athletes and people who have had accidents.” I do not do that it because it is a job, but because it is what I like to do and it fills me. Thanks to having followed what my heart told me to, I have been able to break many stereotypes and barriers of my profession in the sport arena; an aspect that had always been in my life and found no room to integrate into my profession. That’s why I am now working with one of the hardest sports there is for a woman, Baseball. This one has always been a sport in which women had never been viewed or accepted as a professional. Thanks to what I have learned in university courses, the challenges and experiences as a college student, I had managed to get where I am today and be the professional I am.

Letters from Those Who Dare to Intervene with Children

During the multiple experiences of high school in psychology, Olga Rodriguez, a student of graduate school in psychology, learned at the Faculty of Social Sciences

everything about the theory of the discipline, but soon began to question me if she was really ready to go to graduate school and perform as a practitioner. Some, like Olga Rodriguez, school psychologist, visit the Faculty of Education, across the Rio Piedras campus, to discover that not only they could take some courses there, but could also complete a second concentration in Education (K-3). The courses in this faculty enabled her to complete a broader vision of the reality of the same psychology, so she began taking courses with future teachers, with a different methodology, applied to the teaching-learning process and from a more practice perspective. Courses such as the human growth and development, language teaching at the elementary level, teaching literacy, social studies, science, and mathematics at the elementary level and the pre-practice, among others, allowed her to see firsthand what she is going to face once working in the school as a school psychologist. Here comes the issue of trust:

I think the trust they placed in us, the students, was the key. I understand that because we already knew the scenario to where they were sending us, it allowed us to explore and then discuss it in class and base these experiences with discussed theories. When I applied entrance into graduate school, and went in with already experiences from the faculties of Social Sciences and Education and I understand that was the key that I expected. Not only I knew the psychological and educational theory, but also the school setting, the players, and the dialects. I think the field of education has its own jargon and I was informed of it. Undoubtedly, it was the best combination to get ready for school psychology.

Her practical experience in school psychology in the fourth and final cycle in the UPR Elementary School was the first time she experienced working closely with a special education teacher, a counselor, and several teachers with different plans, in multi-grade and emergent curriculum. At this stage of the process, Olga begins to wonder if she really was ready to be an agent for help and possible change in what appeared to be all going well and where all are highly competent. But reasonable doubt is experienced constantly, not because she is negative but because it is the pendulum motor that leads from pole to pole, no longer having the big picture of the ever-changing and questionable reality:

Several times had passed and still (sometimes) passes that thought through my mind. It was instrumental in this final stage, the ever-present emotional and professional support of my supervisor and mentor, both in person, by telephone and electronically. I never forget how much this helped to reaffirm in my speeches and my clinical and theoretical interpretations, as well as how she put in my repertoire of tools a therapeutic board game "Talking, Feeling and Doing Game"³ that she gave me to work with some of my children. It was a great tool and I already have a copy for my collection of personal work. I learned that Problematicizing is absolutely necessary for proposing change.

Olga Noemí Rodríguez Zamora
School Psychologist

Partnerships in a Legal Case

Yojanna Cuenca graduated in 2000 as a Special Education Teacher. Since then she has been working and developing as a professional in different areas within the field. Today she is pursuing her doctorate degree in special education at George Mason University in Virginia. She took three courses with me and I am very grateful to her because she has been a collaborator with my courses in Educational Psychology while she worked at NICHY on audio conferences with my students. She also accepted the challenge of sharing work with as assistant in a legal case from the Legal Clinic at the Law School of the University of Puerto Rico while she was still doing her BA. We were reading Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and Lev Vygotsky's chapter on the role of tools and language. That semester the course was not a classic-content course. It was a Seminar of Personal Development which I changed dramatically from being a counseling type of course to a narrative-reading political and social seminar. While I was writing other chapters of this book, I received a call from her. I was breast-feeding my 7-month son, Ignacio, at the time that I was on a sabbatical license. It was very common to be with my baby and connected to the laptop outlining my ideas. I was very happy with her call; she had gone through many personal events and had finally emerged triumphant in her work at the university and in her project for her thesis. She wrote a letter to me saying:

At that moment in time, little I knew how her teaching was going to impact my career in the years to come. It was in her class that for the first time I heard the name Paulo Freire and read *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. For the first time I was encouraged to think "outside the box," be critical and analytical about the world I live in. It is very interesting and enlightening to reflect on specific moments in time in which you were truly touched by a learning discussion or by a class that changed the way you see reality. As we discussed in class, for Freire, education is a practice of freedom, the means by which the learner develops a sense of confidence and efficacy to change oneself and to question the world in order to transform it. As a future professor, training pre-service teachers to become educators, I now see the impact and the importance to teach students through dialogue, to think outside the box and to become critical thinkers. This is one of the many things I learned from her and up to this date, the work of Paulo Freire has been the guiding force of my research and my teaching. I am glad I had exposure to her work since the beginning of my career. Not only taught me how to become a better educator, also she provided me with experiences and opportunities that helped me better understand the special education process. I had the opportunity to work with her in a legal case in which we conducted research on the US Public Law Individuals with Disabilities Educational Act and autism, prepared and analyzed reports on findings for use in legal case, and participated in meetings with attorneys and psychologists related to cases. This experience helped me later on in my work as a teacher, but also at the National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY). It made me more aware of policies, procedures, and the special education law. Sometimes as educators we don't see how the seeds planted in our students will grow or if they ever will, but from personal experience I can say the seeds that my professors planted in me grew and have helped built a career in special education I am passionate about and developed a sense of willingness to question the world and make everything possible to transform it.

Trusting Teachers' Questions: Action Research in *(E)Motion*

I have good stories of teachers, including two teachers who were my mentoring (mentees) in a project-partnership between science and mathematics that I sought to fortify the content of the discipline while developing an action research related with specific practices and their dispositions. For these teachers I wanted to recollect their thoughts about the process for fourteen Saturdays and during part of their Summer, 2008–2009. I asked to write about experiences and coached to activate their prior knowledge, to retrieve from long-term memory any situation that may have impacted their ways of doing things. When writing their narratives, no restrictions on grammatical rules were considered, just the ideas. The importance of allowing the teacher to write freely without borders or specific parameters was to help them focus on their thinking and structure to ensure their ideas; or that by recreating the storytelling, insight and/or self-reflection, it would arise and provoke their own questioning that could change the flow of their teaching practices. The thrill of surprise, and fear of the unknown, which helps us to orient ourselves in front of a new situation was what occurred in Keyla Soto, middle school teacher of science. The answers she received from her students when she was pushed the challenge of testing—in her own research into action—question their ability, and bet on it. It was at a workshop on researching action or action research that I had with science teachers who experienced the joy of a teacher being surprised by their students. One of the best moments as an educator and workshop leader is always when I hear teachers express their hope in the work and effort of their own DESIGN, even when based on what they doubted. Keyla, a 2-year teacher of experience in Education in Sciences in the secondary level, says:

The seventh graders can give much more than I asked . . . but that is possible when one knows how to exploit that potential for themselves, discovering techniques such as case studies. Using teaching and learning tools that help students as well as teachers to develop critical thinking and scientific goals, both learn new possibilities. They could not write meaningful sentences . . . I worked with them, I thought that they could not, but I was surprised. These guys are in a difficult situation . . . the school has been for several years in a program for improvement under NCLB, and often the morale of teachers is negative. Even with these obstacles, I think they showed me that they can meet the challenge.

Emotions provoke a personal experience, a subjective reaction to the environment that comes with organizational changes (physiological and endocrine) of innate origin, influenced by experience that is constructed and mediated by culture. Emotions have an adaptive function of our body that surrounds us. It is a condition that occurs suddenly and abruptly, in the form of “crisis” more or less violent and more or less temporary. In humans the experience of an emotion usually involves a set of cognitions, attitudes, and beliefs about the world, which we use to assess a particular situation and therefore influence the way we perceive the situation. In a paper about the role of the environment—context—in child development, Vygotsky stated that “emotional experience [*perezhivaine*] also helps us select those characteristics which played a role in determining the attitude to the given situation (1994, p. 342).

The basic categories of emotions, like fear, is the anticipation of a threat or danger that causes anxiety, uncertainty, insecurity, and surprise, leading to shock, astonishment, and confusion, which can be the engines for a cognitive approach to know what happens and what happens to me. This is why pedagogy in (e)motion has an important place in critical pedagogy. As Paulo Freire said about fear and the qualities of a progressive educator in his *Fourth Letter* (1998, p. 41):

In speaking about fear, we . . . are speaking about something very concrete. [. . .] Second, we must make sure that we understand that we are speaking about something very normal. We are faced with the need to be very clear of our choice, and that requires concrete certain procedures and practices, which are the very experiences that cause fear.

Far from avoiding confronting violent emotions we venture to work toward becoming clearer in our choices and dreams, aspirations and goals and then recognize, as students and faculty, that we are the political agents of change or conformity. Fear is therefore an engine that turns on the feeling-thinker being of us that thanks to fear and surprise, we can realize how far it is to improve or not in a democracy. Emotions also color the thoughts and make them look flashy as in the case of joy associated with fun, exhilaration, gratification, and contentment, giving a sense of comfort and security while sadness we relate to pain, loneliness, and pessimism.

Omayra Gorgas, another short-time teacher in teaching 3 years, expressed other emotions: the joy of seeing her science students from a sixth-grade public school in San Juan, who had never done scientific research, being successful and enjoying all the activities she planned in PBL. Here:

My students were able to conceive the idea of working outside the classroom, it engaged them in scientific research on a problem that could be real [PBL] and this led them to get excited and be part of the project. I hope to succeed in my students' motivation and interest in learning science, specifically to understand why and how things happen around us. The science is interesting and relevant for students when they are due to direct or concrete experiences. When we work on any concept we must work in stages or phases and thus gradually encompass the information to generate knowledge.

I am of the teachers who favor activities outside the classroom. Many times we cannot cover within the classroom what can be done with field trips and excursions. At first, the students believed that these activities were only for personal enjoyment . . . But if we make them understand the objectives and activities to be carried out, then they will realize the importance of a field trip for them with their immediate community.

Again we find statements in research on classroom environment that says this environment allows students the participation with each other, which in turn lays the ground for the teacher to be measured, tested, and evaluated in her own practices. Both inquiries provide a compass to expand and strengthen the appropriation of knowledge and to use their personal knowledge, taken from the street in their community, which provokes the pedagogy of the street. All of this places the teacher in a central, not peripheral, position in the educational reforms. This attitude of problematizing, and of optimism, emphasizes an active teaching, not docile, but well informed of epistemological twists, in this case science and mathematics, both gone through historical revolutions stated by Thomas Kuhn, originated by the need to re-invent the way we do science and to think for what we do it. Returning to Joe

Kincheloe (2004), Paulo Freire (1997), and Macedo (1994) to be critical is equivalent to assuming that we are active agents who self-analyze reflections on knowledge of the world, leading them to action. Thus action research is the logical extension of critical theory and enhances the teacher who at the same time empowers the student.

On the other hand, if we consider the adaptive purpose of emotions, we could maximize their range of action: happiness or joy leads us to reproduce and recreate; and sorrow invites us to a new personal reintegration. Hostos (1991), who originally wrote *Pedagogy of Science (Ciencia de la pedagogía)* in the nineteenth century, shares a visionary thought about the personal life of the human being:

Life is a discord, asking us to learn through moaning, crying, working, perfecting to enter into a higher harmony of the passively contemplated or imitated by the classical, notes continuously discordant, that in the individual, national, and universal evolutions of the man in space and time, launches every moment the lyre of a thousand strings that, with the name of History, weep, or sings, praises or reprimands, exalts or reviles, blesses or curses, swells or acts as a devil the actions of the Humanity in all spheres of action, organizational, moral and intellectual life making this a continuous Creation.

Children's Literature: For Teachers to Trust

I remember designing a workshop about the social and cultural nature of learning with the teachers in the public system which was called *Exploring the Story of Metaphors in the Collaborative and Meaningful Learning*. My work in these seminars of teachers that lasted a whole summer was to advise the facilitators in the area of psychosocial learning, group dynamics, valuation, and strategies for implementing the constructivist dialectic focus. The conceptual framework of the Summer Academy with teachers argued that learning that happens in the real context in a community of reflective practice is an ideal model for encouraging teachers in integrating in their teaching technology with meaning. Contextualized learning and the concept of community of practice are proposals for social anthropologist J. Wash. It has its basis in theories about the value of the learning experience of the educator and philosopher John Dewey and continental theories of socially constructed learning of the lawyer, doctor, and psychologist Lev Vygotsky. The conceptual guidelines of John Dewey argue that education should lead to reflection and its celebration; the community of learners is generated from social action; teachers provide conditions that stimulate thinking, rather than repetitive mechanical skills, giving privilege to the communication of purpose and intent. We constitute and make commitments to work in community learning and for this we use many technological and human support, time, and continuity.

Using the story of *Stellaluna* by Janell Cannon⁴ the analysis and reflection of the complexities in the learning and teaching experience emerged, and we were able to even dramatize it and have fun, too. *Stellaluna* (a fruit bat) was separated from her mother before she was old enough to fly. Soon the baby bat ends up in a bird's nest filled with three baby birds named Pip, Flitter, and Flap. The mother *bird* will let *Stellaluna* be part of the family only if she eats bugs, not hang by her feet and sleep

at night! But she finds out that not all winged creatures eat fruit or are “culturally and biologically adapted” the same way. But swallowing food that crawls is just one of the many amazing things this little fruit bat must learn to do. When Stellaluna and the birds are out playing, it gets dark and the birds go home without her because they will not be able to see in the dark. Stellaluna keeps flying, but when Stellaluna’s wings hurt, she stops to rest, hanging by her thumbs. Soon another bat comes to ask why Stellaluna is hanging by her thumbs; when she told the bats the story of what had happened after they were attacked by the owl, another bat interrupted the story: her mom. Not all are lessons in survival; however, others were lessons in search for meaning, adaptation, and development. For Stellaluna adapting to the habits of their new family (birds), she learns the essence of friendship in humorous and touching ways.

Through the story teachers brought to the group deep messages found in the journey of this little fruit bat which could be translated into metaphors of power relations, peer learning, learning as a social construction, diversity, among others. We created different groups to analyze the different metaphors of contexts learning and development, such as the nature of learning and its development, relationships between significant pairs, relationships between apprentices and teachers, relationships of power and developmental assets—emotional, spiritual, physical, and intellectual. They narrated their own short stories as teachers and stories while they were students themselves. We created a space for spiritual connection with nature and our evolutionary self, which made evident the relationship of each living creature in the world.

Pedagogy in (E)Motion: Between Trust and Doubt

Inconformity drives us between doubt and trust . . . As if it were a tribute to Erik Erikson, famous for his theoretical model of the psychosocial crisis of man, that necessary tension is like a turning point that causes a crisis. It is not as catastrophic as one can imagine, but the concept of crisis calls for attention and informs about strength and vulnerabilities. While the intellectual world of academia, with good intentions and social foundations, has developed definitions for what would be intelligence in many dimensions, the proposed pedagogy in emotion does not refer to a construct that seeks to replace or is strapped to the definitions—perhaps the intention—of authors such as Salovy & Mayer, Gardner, Stenberg, Armstrong, and Goldman, who have proven that intellectual conceptualization must be connected to the engine of emotions, interests, and motivations which in turn are rooted in our being philogenetic and cultural. The word “intelligence” comes from the Latin terms “intus legere” (read into); also “intelligens” (the one who understands). “Legere” also means choosing, arrest, or apprehension (Subirats, 2007).

On the other hand, *educere* translates to extract . . . It seems that we have a charge of cultural heritage to remove, extract, take, from the inside what is not developed from within. The Greek epistemological tradition encourages us to trust that what we remove from the inside is what is from the outside, and the outside forms the

basis of what is inside. That is, the potential that we have in our phylogenetic baggage “will be” cultural forms of action and work in historical and cultural context. One is smart who uses the experience, knowledge, and intuition to solve problems faced in different contexts, but in context, a person is more skilled than others. So the intelligence concept must be tied to the forms of cultural production and experience. For example, adults living in cosmopolitan cities and “advanced” on sophisticated and expensive technology and adults living in less advantaged societies in digital technologies: who could deal better with a drop in electricity? Given a problem situation, the intelligent person will proceed to analyze causes, see possible solutions, anticipate consequences, establish strategies for action, decide and implement the actions, and evaluate results, with flexibility to adapt to the demands of the context where the problem originates and, of course, to learn from experience by transfer to other similar situations; this is not to say that the person copies and applies results: he modifies and transforms to satisfy new demands, but always knowing the boundaries imposed by the culture and history. The best example because of the evolution of human thought and emotion and cognition is a natural history inclusive museum. The intelligent person applies the best possible behavior in situations in his lifetime and space-time and historical context.

We must not fall into the trap of separating the two components—the emotional and intellectual—in the assessment and evaluation of a student’s academic profile. Again, reducing the power of emotion intended only motivation. The ability to feel-think that leads us to generate creative ideas, solve problems—ethical-moral, political, and evaluative—and connect events and data, among other things, must be nurtured by a strong and healthy spiritual development that claims human complexity, decipherable and understandable as continuous development. Intellectual development is the ability to understand the thought from the mind-psyche—from the Greek word for soul—and human activity in society. As if it were a compass—a tool and cultural invention—the human is the meeting point between the individual organism ontogeny and phylogeny represented in the cultural community. We must recognize that there is violence, articulated from the same positivist epistemology, and claiming certainty where society is in constant change, drives through a spiral of institutional violent acts. Those acts become in human violence in schools by students, teachers to students, teachers by teachers, parents to students, to teachers and administrators, and vice versa and should not be simplified only to acting-out behaviors, it is also a lack of significant attachments which corrode us. Thus, doubt and trust together prevent us from being paralyzed. From the complementarity emerging between trust and doubt, pedagogy is more sensitive, controversial, and radical that has a constant movement.

Notes

1. This is a concept from Ruth Behar (1996) writings on cultural anthropology. She has pointed out that the social scientist always has a dilemma when studying his or her own culture, “which is always a complicated thing to do, because you end up in a strange “in between” position, both insider and outsider at the same time”.

2. Interview conducted on February, 2008 to a former student, who was about to graduate from the College of Education's teacher preparation program, on the topic of practicum experiences. I knew her disposition to be critical as she was my student in the Educational Psychology course.
3. This is a therapeutic game created by Dr. Richard Gardner, MD. with Creative Therapeutics, Inc., 1998, 1973.
4. Written in 1994, this book aired on the PBS series *Reading Rainbow* that same year. It is featured in the 2001 movie *I am Sam* and is a very influential factor. In addition, MGM and Scholastic Productions released *Stellaluna* on DVD. In 2005 the author received a Bat Conservation Award from the Organization for Bat Conservation. The book includes meaningful information about different species of bats and how they live and survive.

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Chapter 8

Resilience, Resistance, and Reinvention

Without adversity there is no resilience.
Pedro Subirats, 2007¹

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Resilience Starts with R . . . as Does Resistance and Reinvention

Resilience, resistance, and reinvention share a common denominator: they are turning points that generate knowledge. What makes these mind-body states possible are the adverse and conflictive conditions which trigger their movement and action. Resilience is, for many scholars and psychologists, a source of strength; resistance takes heroism; and reinvention needs personal and collective conscience and genius.

Through a pedagogy moved by a well-thought and articulated emotion, and resulting in practices that connect with transversal themes like the problematization of the public and cultural environment, the constant reflection of personal motivations, the common unity of different but genuine ideas, and the constant search for justice and the sensibility as critical educators, we can generate knowledge for sustainability. The themes of resilience, resistance, and ruptures for reinvention are in tune with their greater themes woven by critical pedagogy and post-formal thought. Both post-formal thinking and critical pedagogy recognize the *felt reason* of pedagogy in (e)motion as a motor for generating pedagogical practices that are daring, just, and sensible. In this chapter I would like to work with what is called diverse-intentional efforts with a political and pedagogical objective to rescue hope, and positive risk from cynicism, and hopelessness, even in the presence (challenges) of pragmatic and attitudinal difficulty. Opening the windows of human rights education (HRE) to political-civic participation we can reach other spaces and dimensions, whether it be invading what is present and reformulating it as an ontological necessity to transform history.

Our living brain is an activity center that interconnects with social and physical contexts in a symbiotic relation to create the history of cultural development. The idea of the sociogenesis of the cognitive-emotional development is articulated in the historic-cultural perspective of Vygotsky's theoretical thought by the mediation of signs and instruments and the cultural action of humans. Genetically, social relations, real relations among people, sustain all superior mental functions and their relations. Thus, we must reconceptualize mind as an entity formed by physiology and cultural heritage; in other words, a more complex identity and functioning that merit more complex explanations. The human mind has been transformed more profoundly by cultural heritage which explains how we have interacted with the physical and symbolic world. Therefore, a new filogenetic map is emerging, giving to emotions an important role for resiliency, resistance, and reinvention. The important role of the small almond called *tonsil* in the emotional brain has demonstrated that sense messages of the eye and the ears (those most used) travel first to the cerebral regions of the thalamus and subsequently directed toward the tonsil. On the other hand, a second signal of the thalamus is directed at the neocortex, the "executive and thinking brain". Research from psychology and neurobiology (Alvarez, 2006) recognizes emotions as integral in the cognitive processes that involve memory, be it episodic, semantic, or procedural. As I have indicated, we are our memories in the sense of re-collections that name and distinguish our lives. Thus, our emotions take advantage of the stimulus we receive, which in essence trigger our behavior in an emotional and *cultural* way in order to remake them and accommodate experience to new situations. Emotions are the buffers that adapt our interpretative experience to new scenarios or events. Emotions can connect us to other hyperealities that can provide good alternatives to conflict resolution, problem solving, interpretation, and creative ways of approaching and managing or maintaining conflict. We cannot think knowledge unless we feel knowledge. Whatever we do, as Maturana and Varela (1992) stated, whether concrete actions or more sophisticated, creative and reflective actions, "involves us totally in the body" (p.

248) and at the end, only our truly connection with others will bring the world forth on.

From a post-formal epistemology (Kincheloe, 2004; Kincheloe, Steinberg, & Hinchey, 1999), the task of educating requires the complete human repertoire of strengths, among which reside the emotions, creativity, political clarity, and divergent thinking in order to broaden the possibilities of knowing and “seeing” *alternative rationalities*.² Our repertoire of cultural abilities such as making art and science, and making political sense from nonacademic scenarios or “street pedagogy” represent new challenges to examine our ways of knowing. Therefore the power of resiliency and the paths to attain it can be seen as the result of a post-formal thinking, a deep sense of “otherness” and a pedagogy in (e)motion. Resiliency will be portrayed in this chapter through the reflection and life of a very special teacher named Reynaldo Marrero. The resistance against conformism, on the other hand, comes to life in me from the experience with a class-action lawsuit and a group of heroic parents, as well as school communities which have been transforming themselves from a passive role to one more active and political. Reinvention means some kind of rupture—How not to become a slave, a puppet of our inventions, but instead to be brave to explore and interrogate our ruptures for the sake of understanding. Understanding, then, takes the form of the moral and ethical reserve that is exemplified by a critical and careful perspective of concepts, ideas, and interpretations.

Resilience Needs Stimulus and Affect

To speak of resiliency is to speak plasticity and movement for transformation! Just as our brain is capable of functioning in our favor using all of the neurological networks that function in our cultural action, so too is the power evident in the affective and emotional plane. The affect is necessary for all human beings—but more importantly in younger persons—impacting their cerebral development and as such all of their lifelong learning experiences. This development of the brain is affected by acts linked to emotions and sentiment. These acts influence greatly in the dispositions that children will develop toward learning. This is why children today need to be prepared to be the adults of tomorrow, and the adults of today need to be prepared to respect the dreams of today’s children. Emotions and affects filter into our thoughts and ideas about others, about ourselves, and how the world functions. Our body lives and vibrates to the sound of emotions and sentiment, of sensations that manifest themselves and as such, affect the form in which we learn, and can determine how happy and successful we can be.

But we also have the potential to adapt ourselves to material conditions of life, be they good or bad. We do not cease to function because of these, we merely mold ourselves, given the plasticity of our neurological development. However, neurological and physical development depends, in great part, on the environmental stimulation in order to manifest itself—whether that stimulation is optimal or deficient. Among children and youth, the most successful resist hostile and violent environments and

change their destiny. And others submit with no hope. This is why we must protect children from apathy and the indifference that causes abuse in all of its forms: emotional, physical, and institutional in the form of state institutions themselves. Institutional abuse is overwhelming because it is all-encompassing and sustained. Its spiraling effect is strengthened like a tornado when climatological conditions worsen. As such, since we are feeling it day to day, the spiral of violences is nursed by the indifference, the apathy, the cynicism, the laziness, the corruption, and the familiar and social distancing. Here lies the power of affection (Nelson, 2007), attraction, and timely sensory stimulation at the neuro cerebral level which nurtures human existence in all developmental stages, but more fundamental in early stages of life. Resilient souls that have lacked affect have obtained it and been able to multiply it exponentially; such has been the example of Puerto Ricans like Reinaldo Marrero (drama teacher and a lovely father). Prof. Marrero is an inner city teacher who teaches adolescents in a deprived socioeconomic area.

A Resilient Teacher: A Quixote in the Public School

The number of children that are abandoned or orphaned by parents, relatives, even by the school system is a reflection of how much a society cares about resiliency and life. Reynaldo Marrero is a teacher that resisted giving up on hope and the challenge to live for education, in spite of a failing system. Reynaldo himself is the product of resilience in the face of a street-hardened childhood. As drama teacher, he uses every resource, every minute he has to convey, convince, persuade, and encourage his middle school students.

I go with them that is, that's my world. It is a very fulfilling experience to work with the students because in the long run they appreciate it, and this I have seen and felt. I have been a teacher for 12 years and at times I walk through Plaza Las Americas shopping mall and the students surprised me by hanging from my back. I've been in this middle school only for three years, even so the students are very grateful and respectful, because if you respect and give them the "correct" tools, they do not forget, and they express that they are ready to defend me if something were to happen.

By definition resiliency is the capability to rebound or to spring back, is the power of recovery on extreme conditions. It is a complex and yet powerful human capacity. We have to understand that development is part of a very complex, unstable, socio-historical phenomenon. However, teachers need to develop resiliency in order to be empathetic with students. Teachers must know adversity, how it is on the street, and be able to grasp concepts from difficult contexts. Being empathic helps, but we as educators and schoolteachers must *feel* empathy to be better mediators and advocates. The human concept of resilience is to me an emotional disposition; while it moves counter-currents also nourish your energy to resist and come out on top. One of those buffers for resiliency is the emotional reserve we have for adaptation. An emancipatory thought must consider that the content and curriculum are part of the

contextualized social fabric. In the following testimony from an interview,³ conducted in July of 2009, Mr. Marrero, a teacher, points for the creation of networks of solidarity based on an affective accompaniment of students.

RM “From the time I begin my class, I presented the students the project and I let them know that it requires much discipline. I continue constructing day by day working it in sections; scenery, an individual manner followed by a unification of the parts. In that way, we construct a theater type montage whether it be of a short story or some novel that the students are studying at that moment.

What I most work with the students is discipline—tenacity, consistency, and then they can see what they have accomplished. Once that, well, we accomplished disciplining the student who can then have a clearer sense of what wants to be accomplished; when one is focused or when one knows what he wants to accomplish with the students, no barrier comes between the accomplishment of the work and our efforts. This year has been very challenging; I discovered three barriers; little motivation from the students and parents, bad direction, and very little support from companions. I have 30 students on the first day of class and then only six or nine remaining. . . They go. . . Some say they are going to eat something. . . I always tell them, “but come back because I want you to see the alternatives that are here, present in my classroom so that you can accomplish your goals”.

NZ And do they return once they’ve left the classroom? It’s like a test of trust.
 RM Yes. . . they return and they give themselves the opportunity. . . they give me chance to introduce them to the histrionic arts. I’m patient. . . because I know exactly what they’re feeling. I had to live by myself, on the streets, working and getting discipline since I was 16. At 21 I enrolled in the Gabriela Mistral High School to get my GED. . . I still had to support myself. Then I enrolled in the Junior College. . . it lasts two years. It helped me to do the transition that to the University of Puerto Rico, it’s the university life, the long hours devoted to read and to think. I was a young adult anxious to redo my live. It was a memorable and inspired experience, I. . . and graduated with honors.

I have found students that have hit rock bottom and if you were to see them you would say never will this one be able to do something. But, they surprise you. When they see the opportunities, when you put the tools before them they transform into something else. It’s like going to a desert and saying there’s nothing here. But, the moment you find yourself in the middle of the desert you discover an incredible oasis.

NZ Your motives as an educator must be those that seek knowledge, those that challenge the established order of just asking and answering in the classroom just because the professor says so. It’s more like moving because in movement there is a necessity to see from another perspective, to give an

unexpected answer, to test the limits of the educator, to calibrate the sincerity of the teacher regarding the expression “there are no silly questions”. Being so the concept of energy is reconstructed and politicized in an “concerted movement” that invites one to move with a motive. This is why the classroom becomes into a workshop, allowing for the development of skills and talents.

RM “There is talent in all of the groups. But, I based each group on their workshops so that they are not bored. The group that least cooperate, well to those I assigned the task of designing the scenery. And they are marveled at this because they . . . I always say if you put together a scenery for this playing into an “A” in acting, even though they have not participated in acting, makeup, and costume. And this motivates them to make spectacular sceneries. Even though they are recycled, they are not new, but we treasure them and make them our own. I know something is left. . . They see me on Facebook—the social network—and they say. . . “teacher, you are the best”. This makes me happy but more importantly the realization that they left the classroom with positive experiences for their personal development”.

Resiliency Means Roots for Youngsters

Teachers with groups, teachers that remain is the tendency of the past. I do not want to say that the past is better. Instead I want to recognize that work conditions and the policies for the placement of teachers today do not lend themselves to stability. I remember my great aunt, Rosa María Zambrana, who at 99 years of age—graduating as a teacher in 1912—spoke of all the students to whom she gave class, including many who passed away before she did. Miss Zambrana, as many called her, was a legend in my town because of her longevity, strong personality, and a life devoted to the same school. Many bonds of trust were created at that time. Those bondings are roots for stability. But speaking students who have abandoned school express that new changes in teachers affect their ability to establish sound relationships. This is where the teacher that remains is in a better position to establish ties of trust, friendship, support among teachers and students, and a positive effect on learning and teaching processes. In fact, one of the alternatives proposed by the participants for the improvement of the classroom was to avoid that teachers resign.

Another variant in favor of the students is to leave spaces so that they can have work experiences, because it is important that the students discover what they can do well and not focus so much on what costs great effort to accomplish. Cognitive processes are affective, attended first in the emotional brain and if we nourish in this we are situating ourselves within a paradigm of possibility and not one of deficit. This is absolutely necessary in order to promote good success, but more than that, to become participant citizens, critical and sensible to the issues that are important to them because are connected with their social concerns. With these attitudes and

with this power they will be able to face successfully the daily situations of life. It is important to note that support services must be directed to the entire school community. It is an interesting fact to know that even when students perceive a relationship of trust with their teachers, they manifest that they do not communicate with them. There is then a distortion between feeling well and feeling that they are able to transcend their personal space to engage in communication. This leaves us with the necessity to strengthen the trust between youth and adults.

Through cooperative learning, one can strengthen group work, with all of its advantages. Having an active role or classes, participating in a way that does not domesticate nor devalue the principle itself, and reducing participation to a “ornamental protagonism” that responds to genuine communicative needs is a sound goal in any classroom setting. This term is what Hart, Trillas, and Novella (in Suriel, 2006) referred to as pseudo-participation. They call it *manipulation* with the participant students that do not understand what they are participating in; *decoration or ornamental* when the participation of girls or boys is ornamental. In *symbolic participation* students participate but the opinions are not taken into consideration. *Assigned but informed participation* has been planned leaving the students on the margins but aware of what is being proposed. *Consulted and informed participation* is when the students are asked their opinion about their participation in a determined project. Their ideas are taken into account. In what would constitute the aspiration of the rights of students to participate one could assert: participation in projects initiated and directed by students and facilitated through an adult process. The participation in projects initiated by students sharing decisions with adults contributes greatly to a vision of a learning that transcends the “student as ornament” philosophy. This invites us to educate from and for a democracy and human rights (Yudkin-Suliveres, Zambrana-Ortiz y Pascual-Morán, 2002) in a critical form and one that is felt-thought.

Peace Culture: The Heart of Resiliency and Resistance

There are three metaphors: it is a *constant task* in the aspiration of considering ourselves beings that can coexist and from this point a pedagogy as a cultural act, unfinished and constant; that is renewed, but questions itself and that acquires form in the context of inequalities and injustices. For this reason I elaborate Human Rights Education (HRE) as the vehicle that travels between pulse form of thought and thought-feeling. It is an *orchestra*—or a theater production—all the instruments have different sounds. We can coexist with these different sounds composing collective symphonies. Metal wind instruments and strings sound one way, woodwinds and percussion sound another, but the challenge is to harmonize fees in such a way that each section is heard. When you hear all of the instruments to gather, the result is harmonious and this makes sense. It is a *possible dream*, as expressed by Paulo Freire at the end of the twentieth century, a utopia. The poetry that follows, was inspired by the project Educating for Freedom, in which I got involved with my colleague, and dreamer of reality, Dr. Anaida Pascual Morán.

We are free

We cannot live without playing! Aura, 8 years old

Our life Project
is an agenda of the people—you, me, and the rest—that desires so much
to live in peace.

•

Not men nor women nor children nor the elderly
live by speaking of peace alone.
Though we all speak of it, many do not know how to read it.
Peace is read on the faces of the consoled, of the weary
and of those that have given the fight for others.

•

It is read on the smiles of little boys and girls
when they play and feel themselves capable.
We live it when we respect the spaces and differences
of our neighbors; and we are free.

•

In this respect it is nourished when by the word,
with poetry, music,
theater, play, stories and other manifestations
of the child-I
and when we reject vigorously the falsity,
the tyranny, the angered strike; and we are free!

•

When you are frank and open,
clear and firm; valiant and daring
to reclaim the only intention
those principles that like the air and water,
are indispensable and belong to everyone, we are free!

•

When we denounced injustice and
the very violence that we hold inside;
we are more free, we are cleaner; we are free!

•

The task that we intend is tolerant of that nature which
makes us human . . . the task is difficult
that holds dearly to hope and assertively defends
the delicate seed of freedom
for the routine rescue of dignity.

Nellie Z.
4/17/96

From the Culture of Violence to Resistance in (E)Motion

The violence of culture has characterized human societies since the beginning of humanity itself—from the point of view of how a human begins to think in the context of the natural world and later the world as societies. The culture of violence is what we are constantly doing and what we have become accustomed to re-creating as humans. The culture of violence can then be expressed in three words: our codes of coexistence has become uncontrolled, our lack of consideration for the other, and

in our individualism, which through various means of communication resides in people. In the words of music teacher Elizabeth Cruz, “we have lost the capacity to debate our practices and ideas as real teachers. Our colleagues interpret a constructive critique as a ‘low blow’ and that is violent for human relations. . .” . (Personal communication, September 2009). For this teacher of 25 years of experience, sometimes there is a hostile climate that drains and paralyzes any system, resulting in a growth in violence. We do not work in favor of consensus, in favor of the dialogue, in favor of the people. It is like adding fuel to the fire of contentious emotions. To not do anything, is almost, to incite violence.

Our youth—and myself when I was young—has been molded by a colonial educational project that uneducates and deforms their possibilities of becoming more aware of their future because it has robbed their history and identity. In the new century, but under the same agenda, the mass media, like television, the press, and radio, show and represent a violently fantastic world where corruption and dishonesty prevail as something natural, spontaneous, and successful. On the other hand, government policies utilize infancy and childhood toward political ends—without so much as guaranteeing a minimum protection and services which should be present under the Constitution of Puerto Rico—and the hope that peace persons can trust in the future which awaits them, in the nation that has witnessed their birth.

Education for an active piece—is not hypocritical pacifism nor manipulating—and justice for all is a risky multidisciplinary project of critical pedagogy and a transgressive practice that promotes human rights and the values that direct us toward a self-sustained, complementary, and diverse culture. It is a type of critical pedagogy that expects to produce great changes, where the teacher educates through example so that never again will we commit the same atrocities of the past. Pedagogy in e-motion, and the notion of street pedagogy see conflict as a vehicle and tools for change in the way we interpret, transcend, and forge opportunities. The basis for resiliency lies in our ability to visualize conflict as an opportunity for introspection and risk-taking. In essence, conflict is more and better than what we have been led to believe. A creative position invites one to take calculated risks, to transcend traditional parameters, given that these have not taken us very far from our own fears. To work with a good sense of humor is to work creatively. Creativity does not mean without planning, instead it means planning with the mind and heart that thinks and feels in a creative manner, in a manner that is divergent and not convergent. Do what no one can think of. We must re-create, reinvent dynamics, we must enliven, we must invite persons to take part in that which corresponds to their own potential. We cannot permit an hour to be wasted, to put energy into our ideas and aspirations to forge a culture of peace. In terms of strategies we can use humor, persuasion, and the absurd. We must use creative languages like poetry, metaphors, stories, fables, music, dramatization, and all theatrical resources.

We need not always nor necessarily direct our goals toward that which is functional. We can be systematic and diverse; organized and not standardized. The solution does not always reside in a conventional answer. The management of conflicts is, by its very nature, a dialectical project. And so, to “resolve” something today becomes the birth of a conflict for us to attend tomorrow. We should not see ourselves as resolvers of conflicts, instead as mediators of conflict and in many

occasions as the agents that provoke conflict. To see ourselves as part of the conflict, as part of an agenda that is pushing for changes and in that way, contributing to better understand why we are in conflict and why conflict is a necessary tool for knowledge. From the perspective of street pedagogy, conflict is a vehicle for the understanding of human life in society. In this way we can understand from a closer perspective the possible avenues toward the solution or toward an accord. Another thing is that the solution is not always the answer. Sometimes to problematize is one possible avenue. We must be very careful with the word “*pacífic*,” which should not be read as: “we will not make much noise,” “we will not complain much,” “we will not protest march,” “we will not ask for many meetings”. That pacifism is hypocritical, and what really lies behind that pacifism is fear of the persons to genuinely involve themselves. It is vital and important to create bridges of empathy to confront, and manage with an eye toward resolving conflicts in a way that is pacífic but not pacifist.

Seven Lessons Learned from the Resilience of a National Hero⁴

*I prefer to use the expression people with
challenges—not handicaps
Because their challenges are what make society to move and evolve.*

Sandra Zañter,

A spokesperson of People with Challenges in Puerto Rico
(in a TV interview with Zambrana, 2004⁵)

I redefine the concept resistance when I met Rosa Lydia Vélez, as a person and an activist during a class-action suit which she initiated. I must confess that before the case I had some hope in my country’s judicial system. Today I recognize that in these grand and prolonged problems we not only find many discomforting truths, but also great allies: lawyers, students, children, families, and children with challenges. It was 30 years ago that Rosa Lydia Vega (RLV) launched her resistance campaign demanding that her then 7-year-old daughter receive the special education services she had a right to under the law.

It was a little less than 12 years ago that University of Puerto Rico professor, Dr. Fernando Picó,⁶ offered a Master Conference on Education for Peace, sponsored by the UNESCO Steering Committee at the University of Puerto Rico. Accompanying him were two young men who were serving prison sentences. They spoke of their education and their processes of learning. Said the Jesuit priest and professor in history, “there are seeds that flower because they find fertile terrain”. Should not the schools be fertile terrains for our sons and daughters so that they might flower as individuals and citizens? But unfortunately in many schools, both public and private, thousands of students only lose their will to learn, and their teachers find themselves without the necessary tools, without the equipment, with a less-than-adequate physical plant, teaching staff, and all of those personal and professional resources necessary for success. And so, instead of cultivating and nourishing the terrain of possibility in all of our schools and educational centers we are bureaucratizing and desensitizing both the spaces and resources of human development and potential.

Thirty years ago, as a result of the RLV lawsuit that Judge Peter Ortiz emitted a preliminary injunction in which it was determined that the children with challenges and special needs should, in no more than 60 days, be evaluated and placed, and those that were already registered to get related services and be placed in specialized classrooms would receive them within 90 days. In one of the stages of the case the Department of Education of Puerto Rico was ordered to establish a procedure for the filing of grievances and a protocol for the prompt resolution of these. *First lesson: the persons most concerned with the children of special-education are their families.*

Mrs. Vélez did not find one private nor public school that could attend to the needs of her daughter in spite of Special Education Law—then PL 21 of 1975—derogated por PL 51 in 1996. It was then that she and a handful of families united in a class-suit effort. *Second lesson: Strength is found in unity.*

Other accomplishments were realized through this class-action suit prior to the final sentencing such as “Provisional Relief” by which parents of children with rights to special services and therapies not offered by the Department of Education in Puerto Rico can contract private specialists that are to be paid by the governmental agency. *Third lesson: important and meritorious causes deserve to be struggled for in spite of the deceptions.*

But the constant complaints by individuals for the Department of Education and income clients did not translate into formal change in the Department, and so the record of insufficiency and failures continues. *Fourth lesson: the Department of Education suffers of dry and sterile terrain.*

The mothers and fathers, rather than engaging in a long litigious process sought a resolution by accord (Servicios Legales, 2002). For several months the legal team struggled organizing meetings and consultations with parents. The final sentence was read on February 14, 2002. *Fifth lesson: the genuinely well-intentioned and needy always postpone their own gratification for the common good.*

Since then the court, in a slow process, has maintained jurisdiction over the case in an effort to guarantee compliance with the sentencing. The parents discovered that even in the judicial process the state itself is more tolerant of its own institutions and their shortcomings. With the passing of time the parents learned of just how difficult it is, for the state through its judicial system, to impose strict guidelines and seeing them through. *Sixth lesson: in the face of the grave and constant in compliance of the stipulations demanded of the Department of Education and handed down by the courts, the courts themselves become accomplices.*

And yet, in spite of the fines imposed upon the Department of Education for in compliance, the task remains unfinished and the suffering remains painfully present. *Seventh lesson: late justice is no justice.*

Pedagogy for Sustainability Takes Political Clarity

Education is a cultural complex and vital activity in development, and leads to the progress and liberation of a society. If we aspire to having a competent citizenry that is also productive, responsible, and sustainable, we have to commit ourselves to an education that is sensitive and alive, then admit to differences along the lines

of communities that are diverse with their respective historical struggles. It cannot be “one size fits all” but it has to be sustained as a common national aspiration. This is an inevitable responsibility. One of the pillars of a progressive society is the level of education of its inhabitants, but more importantly than this are the ends toward which they are educated. In a world which convulses constantly and which has a high grade a vulnerability ecologically, economically, and politically, the education that matters is the one which takes sustainability of the human race as its objective. At the same time the practices and conceptions about democracy, citizenship, and street pedagogy are in constant transition in many parts of the world. On the one hand, the inconsistent participation in elections by many persons, the loss of trust of political leaders, and the limitations of representative democracy to ensure the social inclusion and equal rights and opportunities for all have resulted in intense debates regarding what has been called “democratic deficit”.

It is not coincidence that in the field of education there exists a growing preoccupation with the limitations of traditional educational models, for the transmission of information—relevant and good as it may be—leaves much to be desired in terms of the participation and consent of the very persons being educated. The practice of repetitive exercises with little to no meaning, and with little to no passion has demonstrated to be insufficient in the formation of citizens with criticality and political clarity. This is a practice neither capable of instilling health nor solidarity; and much less so participation. In Puerto Rico, the student councils of different faculties at the university level have progressively suffered from a lack of participation, representation, and voice. Simultaneously, there has been a growth in a collective conscience with respect to the need for a collective learning in democratic spaces that promote the common good and human development in such a way that the association between citizenry, education, and a radical democracy be reinvented and historically contextualized. As Dr. Fernando Picó, a Jesuit priest, Puerto Rican professor of history, expressed, “history is made from the people at the top” and so the universities must reinvent what it means to be an institution that “develops from its projects, its imaginaries, purposes and aspirations”.⁷ (Otero-Jover, 2009, p. 13)

I Learn from Questions, not from Answers, Please. . . !

This was one of the revelations that some of my college students had at a conference offered by José Souza da Silva in 2005. The answers imply a position that accommodates, comforts, and finalizes; while a question continues to alert our senses and moves us toward problematizing. This is why the university that timidly accommodates itself negates itself as a genuine university for it lacks reinvention and re-creation and does not have a sense in a society or a world characterized by crisis, by paradigmatic ruptures referred to by Dr. Souza da Silva as a *change of epoch*, in contra-position to an epoch of change. The concept of rupture for reinvention is inherent in the spirit of a genuine university. In its intrinsic significance resides the naturalness of movement, dynamics, change, and a radical urge of knowing. In a

pessimistic tone, Lolas Stepke, a Chilean educator and director of the Bioethics Program of the Health, a pan-American organization, says that “universities are like genes; they cause all metabolism and growth changes, but they never modified themselves” (in Matos, 2006, p. 16). He also asserts that university, like Army and Church, is one of the three institutions of power that have prevailed from medieval times. This is a point for reflection but not for paralyzing. Unlike the institution of Army, churches and universities have evolved in many ways: approaches, they have been civil rights propulsors, provide humanitarian services, transgress political postures, and so on.

From an optimistic position we have the university that sees itself on two levels: at the universal level that offers space for all and the possibility of privileging a radical epistemology, even when it recognizes that conservatism has “a right to exist”. And so Rodríguez (2006) has expressed, “and if something suggests rupture as a product of a progressive process of waste, a deterioration, of decay, many times the natural product of life itself, of the organic evolution of the institutions themselves, this is not necessarily to be understood as a result of previously made poor decisions”. The university is a rupture, is transgressive, defiant, breaking the old paradigms and constructing new mental schemes in order to understand the reality and to act intelligently in its presence. But it is imperative that university spaces, academic and otherwise, at all levels, move toward constant militancy, irreverence, creative initiative in response. As an educator, I should intend to provide a turning point that will guide me in a debate of a conflict. I believe in the pedagogy of questions. Unfortunately much of what is accepted as debate or discussion is grounded upon a promise of practices that have taken the “rules” of language and debate are granted. It is in an interrogation of the premises and against the basis of those rules that we will discover a rupture of what will hopefully become an expression of resilience and reinvention.

A good example of this is the difference between dictation and order vs “drill to perfection”. To enhance *drill to perfection* instead of drilling for boring results in taking your practice and rehearsal to a different level. As when you practice a musical instrument, you must stop and listen to the sound, read just a wrong sound, in a wrong bodily position you are going to correct it because it is the fusion of your goal and your intention, where you are where you want to be. Once you get in tune to your “own sound” you discover your interpretation of the piece. This is how the musician drills to perfection, to convert a simple sound or an idea into a thought, into a beautiful and moving phrase. Associated with a very orthodox behaviorist paradigm, rote drills do little to encourage genuine learning—learning that transforms, challenges, and questions. The following vignette will serve as an illustration.

A third-grade homework assignment given to a child that I had to evaluate for reasons related to her moving to another place, read like this: *Write these 36 words three times in your notebook. Study them for a test.* While I was amazed and reminded of just how much we have criticized this mechanical method, the 8-year-old girl screamed: “*This is so boring that Im not going to do it. I am going to be tired of it*”. At this point, I decided to resist and talk to her English teacher, who, to my surprise,

was an alumni from the College of Education. I had to be very careful and sensitive enough to understand two things: the teachers' expectations and rationale for the assignment and the valid experience she had doing such a pedagogical practice. "*If the teacher really wants the three lists it must be for a reason. Maybe she wants you to memorize them. . .*" The child said: "*I can write one list and read them many times. . .it is the same*". We solved the situation by asking her about different presentations of the "lists". Instead of repeating the lists, I suggested she upgrade the homework by drilling to perfection: to create cards in different colors, paste them on the wall, and reorganize them in many ways, classifying them by categories, organizing them in alphabetical order, etc., in a time frame of three days. It can be fun and, after all, learning was occurring voluntarily and with much more sense; it was orderly enough for her and me. It worked, and her parents shared the positive results with the teacher, who acknowledged that those activities are time consuming for the instructional time she had to devote to 18 students! Such an experience, unfortunately, does not occur in a vacuum; it is not fair to blame teachers only; there is an entire ideology and school administration and management that conspire for this to be. Educational systems must have a mission to democratize and equalize power and as such resist the seduction to become "dictatorial". Therefore, street pedagogy as a concept takes life, meaning, resistance, and possibility to make an alternative reading of reality.

The Need to Interrogate; to Rescue the Historical Memory

You can not see the problem [of communities and schools] with only one source of the problem. . . it is better to have \$50 and the freedom to use it than \$1 million that cannot be managed.

A community leader
Luis Lloréns Torres Residence Project
San Juan, Puerto Rico

It would seem that the person cited in the previous quote is mixing two themes into one. Well, such is not the case, since the quote embraces two truths that complement one another in order to open a discussion that which we could consider another interesting rupture: educational citizenship constructed from within the community. This thought was shared by a community leader from public housing project Luis Llorens Torres, one of the oldest in Puerto Rico with some 30,000 residents. The community has five schools nearby, three have united in a coalition that intend to re-read school law and interpret the concepts of citizenship and participation in order to rescue the historical memory of the community and promote a deep-seated appreciation of their space and experience. Before an audience of some 40 persons, the community leader energetically expressed that the problems at the schools are very complex and should not to be perceived from only one source of origin. From the analysis made by Pizarro (2006) regarding the construction of assistant educational citizenship, one must work with the distribution of power and participation in the educational agenda from an understanding of educational law. Pizarro recommends

the facilitation of processes of action research from the schools; promoting case studies and research on the processes of decentralization and educational autonomy and other countries; investigating how the work of social workers in schools can be utilized as incentives in the processes of the construction of a choose citizenship; institutionalizing the concept of citizenship and human rights into a permanent curriculum and integrating these into the diverse activities of the educational process; and finally revising the Organic Education Law with the participation of the entire school community, community institutions, municipal representation, as well as other institutions and agencies involved in the educational process.

Certain “disorder” is necessary for reinvention, for the birth of resilience and for the growth of resistance. On many occasions we are very conscious of the violations of certain rights and we completely ignore others that are complementary. For example, we are more conscious of human rights at a political level, for persons and nations, but we are not aware of the fact that the UN Charter on Human Rights also pertains to economic rights. Without some rights there would not be others because they are all indivisible and so function synergistically. On the contrary is the spoiled neoliberal position that has become both obsolete and inefficient when considering socioeconomic justice. A brilliant example that illustrates this complementary nature was expressed by Dr. Antonio Martínez in the Second Master Lecture offered by UNESCO Chair Education for Peace titled, *Toward a Systemic Vision of Human Rights and its Implications for Peace: An Agenda for Puerto Rico*. Martínez expressed that the government of Puerto Rico wanted to remove the residents from the community called The Caño Martín Peña,⁸ alleging that these lands did not belong to these persons. The government had plans to use the land for construction and “development”. In one of the many hearings held in the courts, what could only be considered a caricature of the absurd occurred:

an old lady, [. . .] stands before the judge and begins to give a speech on the right to housing. In the course of one hour, the judge issued 210 citations for contempt against the lady for not stopping her speech. In the end, the judge realized that the old lady did not know what contempt of court was and so removed the citations. In part, the judge showed some mercy, in part since he had yet to consider that there were some 500 persons waiting their turn, all of these from the same community. (. . .2001, p. 32)

The Pizarro reading, like that of Martínez, points to a taking of control on the part of communities and schools; one way is action research that then becomes radical epistemology and another is participation and a collective insertion in the demand for human rights. The structures of rule management must be changed in order to make real the possibility of participation. Oppression and discrimination must be made visibly clear since these remain “invisible” to the judicial structures, as we saw in the case of the old lady and the citations of contempt of court. From her own place and space, this woman educated all those that were present. The sparse and trampled culture of participation has had a tendency to silence the voices or divide the sentiment. For this reason the process of involving oneself in the redefinition and appropriation of educational citizenship, according to a community leader, was quite overwhelming because as she said, one had to engage in an exchange with the state in order to alter the relations of power. This is, for this leader, a task that must

be assumed as the responsibility of all from childhood to adolescence and the adult life in an historic community shared by various generations of people.

Communities Have Their Pedagogy

Wisdom is accumulated with experience and expertise that come from political clarity, the redefinition of power, in the form of concepts such as educational citizenship which are then, fundamental parts of knowledge. If in fact this redefinition presents multiple aspects, one of the most important of these would be the democratization of access to information and the generation of knowledge to interpretation; to name knowledge as that which has been forged without the formal intervention of the state, in the school as much as in society at large. This is where street pedagogy—another interpretation of reality—is reflected in order to build and reflect upon the concept of citizenship. According to community leaders, university students, and teachers from the community with whom I shared, “when they arrive from the elementary school, it is like a blank check as we have not learned to pass history on to this child. . . And they are not going to learn it in the school”. Here I learned the power of metaphors—one has no history, so one has no past. . . Who is this and as such, how could they pretend to be part of the presence? They become easy prey for the hegemonic discourse today under the control of a neoliberal message we’re overcoming poverty is seen as leaving the community, with no roots, and not the development of your self from the cradle and as such removing your ties to your community. In a community where the problem of desertion begins in the fourth grade there is an agenda to criminalize the environment without taking into account the role of the government as negligent and abandonment, fueling the perpetuation of the violence that for decades has characterized the division of social classes; and how special needs and special education services have been abandoned and remain absent from the lives of those in the most needy communities.

The community which I speak—Luis Llorens Torres—with its population of some 30,000, with a sufficient history for the creation of a curriculum based on the attributes of that community may not necessarily produce the highest scores on standardized tests, but the students struggle and remain in the schools persevering, which leaves us with an indication of their resilience. It is as if they were navigating with hope through a hopeless space; an indispensable and urgent area for critical and progressive educators.

We deny our history; it is lacking from the school.
A mother who volunteers in a public school

Teresa,⁹ a mother of 6, who volunteers in the Parent Teachers Association of her children’s schools said she was pleased with the workshops they solicited, that help to deal with the levels of anxiety and stress she experienced dealing with her children. This became evidence that many times the persons from the disenfranchised communities often times recognize the help that they need and the desire they have for consultation. On the other hand and with some sorrow she expressed, “the letters

from the Department of Education define participation in a very pretty form. . . in the paper. But I have been in school councils before we are brushed aside with gestures, looks of malice and little attention to the voices of the parents, period. And that no decisions are made on the basis of the agreements at the meetings”. But instead of turning and remaining frustrated, the mother assumes the role of an organizer and advocate bringing numerous fathers and mothers together and requesting their participation in workshops. She said: “I expected to gather some five parents, but I was able to mobilize 15!! As parents we also want to become educated, some of us want to finish our high school education. We can also help by being present when teachers miss school”. Her three oldest sons are in the university; the fourth is in high school, another in middle school, and the youngest in elementary (six in total). Definitely, it takes much more than a school and teachers to achieve this accomplishment: it takes a whole community.

A High Schooler’s Wish List

Zulma is a senior student at the Ramón Power y Girard High School in the Luis Lloréns Torres community in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Students of this school feel much anger and perceive a great deal of distrust on the part of adults because “they think that we will not do anything”. Much is spoken about the creation of consciousness and that the youth are the hope of the future, but as adults, we do not demonstrate that we see and trust the future in the hands of our youth. This young woman has on many an occasion expressed better classes do not fulfill the learning needs nor those of her classmates because the classes do not interest them nor do the students perceive the interest in the efforts of their teachers. She prepared a list of desires and aspirations on what she expects of her parents and teachers. This list includes very complex aspects that can be woven within one another and as such become part of a national educational agenda for the entire country:

- Constant motivation; let it be clear that our dreams matter to them
- Tools to deal with problems
- Commitment and proximity. . . That in itself is change
- Personal development: *we are persons*
- Perseverance: it’s difficult, but much easier to surrender
- The visualization of high expectations
- Participation in the making of decisions

The young woman said this as a reminder to adults: *the next time that a decision had to be made at home or in the school, listen to your youth!*

At this point, after reading Zulma’s “wish list” I must quote what a school principal said about the contributions of her elementary school in making to their community and country:

A school must deal with the community's problems. This is the transformation agenda that our school is taking of. The community social and living tasks are part of our school; we deal with them here; we deal with the sense of being better adults; we boost those early human relations of our students. . . Peace in the streets, at home. . . (García-Blanco, 1994, p. 14).

García-Blanco also points to the idea that sex roles are changing in the community as a result of macro social changes, therefore school curriculum takes into account those changes and visions focusing on “how to become a man, how to become a woman and a person?”. This is Juan Ponce de León public elementary school, a small community school—located in a middle of an affluent urban housing area for development¹⁰—which was rescued and reopened in 1980 by the effort of parents, teachers, and community people, after being closed by the Department of Education. In this school, teachers and principal envisioned what Zulma is calling for: to treat seriously the personal dimension. . . *we are persons*. This dimension is the human, historic, and sociopolitical development, of the students and adults who live and dream in the community and are the delicate human fabric or “mundillo lace”. From the human rights education (HRE) literature focusing on schooling and critical pedagogy (Pascual-Morán, 2008, 2007; Yudkin-Suliveres, Zambrana-Ortiz, & Pacual-Morán, 2002) schools must be spaced for the transgression and transformation of canons on behalf of sustainable and nonviolent society.

Just as there are lists of wishes and longings, there are lists of many experiences of success that attest to the needs of a school community. Behind the success stories resides a critical constructivist perspective of the educational dynamic. Critical constructivism considers that in the teaching, psychological interpretation, and thinking everything is more than the sum of its individual parts. This was a maxim of the humanism and *gestalt*¹¹ *psychology* that for me has been central with respect to the manner in which to develop my understanding of different situations, as much in my public-private practice as an educational psychologist as in the university. In the words of Kincheloe it would be an “epistemological assault upon critical thinking,¹²” given the recognition of the forms in which our psychosocial experience is formed and transformed dynamically in the lived context of doing pedagogy, instead of reproducing it. All teachers and their students bring and contribute to the educational process as compare to the making of a quilt where dispositions remain in constant dynamism, struggle, analysis of contradictions, and discourses. Likewise it rejects lineal procedures and argumentation that reside in a simple logic. And even though at times the simple may appear to be the best alternative, it is not that which is simple that can explain human nature nor the world that surrounds us.

I heard this news that moved me: “87% of schools to become part of a plan for improvement”. . . Said the reporter in a very relaxed tone (sarcasm). . . And If I was dying. . . The community is not taken into consideration, but is blamed for the problems plaguing the community.

Community leader

Illusion of Power and Control

After the reading of the daily bulletin at a school that I visited, I reaffirm myself in that the idea of having a space where the schools' activities can be referenced is excellent, but it must be inclusive and comply with all of the objectives that constitute growth in solidarity, healthy debate, and reflection. Only in that way will such an instrument of dissemination help in the educational transformation of the community. A critical instrument that will give voice to those that have little voice and a medium for the expression of those that do, must have a content that informs and at the same time provides spaces for a sustained dialogue between administration, teachers, and parents. That space must be moderated and attended to by the community leaders, from those sections where it is felt and patently made clear that the dialogue among different parts resides and where shared resolutions are offered, where ideas flow and different opinions flourish in a healthy manner. It is much easier to read acts meant to reflect, it is easier to confront with power than it is to argue with reason, it is easier to let others do than it is to work and mediate oneself, coming together with others to work for a common cause. This is why a pedagogy in (e)motion must move discussions beyond the traditional assumptions of linear communication in this way, schools and the tools that schools provide can move people to discover the significance of street pedagogy.

Unfortunately this is not the leadership we have in the majority of our schools. The space and differences of opinions and proposals become the material of reflection made manifest in the leadership that *distributes the power* to than make decisions. Three examples suffice. The questions and critiques of how curricular matters, administrative matters, and student issues are managed are taken as a personal offense. Reasonable doubt with respect to making up class time, or a critique with respect to the use of computers is interpreted as "sabotage," in the words of some teachers. Others are more explicit and frank, expressing that the parents have nothing to say about the curriculum. Many teachers and administrators interpret every act of free association and public speaking of parents as an alteration to the established power, a transgression. I have had experiences of this type in public and private schools, where we have been questioned for having meetings in the school or for sending communications announcing the meetings intended to discuss the academic affairs of the children in the schools. The principal questioned the group because she had not been invited and another occasion a teacher questioned the very act of meeting outside of or "behind the back" of the school itself. Another example of the contradictions when promoting learning communities committed to share responsibilities is revealed when the school administration identifies the critics, or those that come with a critique of the established policies, as a threat to the school's leadership rising from the bottom strata of the educational administrative power structure. In one instance, a written communication was sent by the administration as a result of some e-mails from parents at the school. The administration's communication explained that in the event of a strike, follow-up homework would be assigned to students at the school. The parents were upset by the unilateral decision-making process. The administration's communication read as follows:

In a learning community it is important to remember the role that each sector plays that in each sector of the community spaces remain open for dialogue to nourish the principles that characterize the educational experience, without excluding the sectors or components that make up the community and their own **particular role** [my emphasis] in a respectful manner. That is that administrators administrate and establish the institutional policies required by the school so that it may function properly, that teachers acquire and develop a school curriculum that nourishes the learning in all our students, that parents collaborate, support, and confide in the school's effort and that the nonteaching staff support through their respective efforts the teaching processes undertaken in the school.

In the wake of this exposition—which I call an illusion of power—it was made clear to me that this hierarchical power to articulate, to name, and to define the responsibilities and specific roles is contradictory and counterproductive to a position that at the same time alludes to collaboration and dialogue. It is through the confrontation of ideas and through an engagement of radical discussions and dialogue of the news that communities forged a shared power. Here I am reminded of the paradox whereby a social administration that on the one hand has the responsibility and power to organize, regulate, and govern also “produces” the freedom to define what it is to govern and organize. The distribution of leadership is not the task of a principal alone, because it is a concept that is developed and forged from practices that implied confidence and risk in the sharing of power and an assumption that this be made clear in the sharing of decision making with others. Consultation with others is part of this focus. Notwithstanding, a principal cannot, even if he wants, consult with 200 families, for example, but he can distribute the effort in different groups of interest that can represent diverse visions of the different communities and sectors; he must confide, follow up, and support the groups in their efforts and assume the challenges and risks implied, if these are to be the foundation of a community of learning. This is the fundamental concept for the development of the basis of a learning community called the school, one that engages in a school context and family context, along with its variants, and all that make up the composition of the learning community.

To confront the neoliberal policies rooted in individualism, the hierarchy of power, competition, management, and the excellence of the free market, is to declare a conflict from the perspective of the organized citizenry. This establishes the need to promote an education based on a dialogue with the people, that promotes a debate and a critical analysis of the problems and that makes possible the conditions for real participation and research for and by the community in a benefit to all. The principal obstacles to a primary education or higher education system that promotes the possibility of the development of knowledge for sustainability is the presence of two elements: an intellectuality tied to the coordinates of a simple thinking process as in the case of an institutional alliance utilitarian reason and instrumentalism (Román, 2009). That which we have on many occasions glorified as knowledge has little affinity with the necessities of the human being in the world that he or she faces and comes to know.

Recently, in my country, Puerto Rico, Law #7 was passed (March 2009). Its official name is: a Declaration of a State of Emergency Establishing a Plan for the

Fiscal Stabilization to Save the Credit of Puerto Rico.¹¹ This law represents the government's public policy in the face of the present fiscal crisis. Its bottom line includes the sacrificing of workers and their jobs in favor of preserving large foreign corporations in Puerto Rico. Some of the results of the enforcement of this law have included firing some 20,000 public-sector employees. In the face of this desperate situation and one responsible for the creation of conflicts in the labor sector and more criminality, the goal of the government needs to be a reinvention parting from different modes for an understanding of the material in historical conditions that prevail. And even though it may cost various generations, we should struggle and aspire to a society where we can all live well, without injury to the rights of others, and that means understanding the rights of others as the responsibility of all. With an epoch of changes—according to de Souza Silva—we continue to imitate globalism that was in itself invented for domination and homogeneity, but with a change of epoch we can invent new histories and interpret and resolve problems in new ways that are socially and economically just.

This particular topic is linked to the ideas of privatization. In news that were published in a local newspaper in November 2009,¹³ from Raleigh, North Carolina, United States, it was said that:

School Sells Grades: A secondary school in North Carolina is selling grades to their students in an attempt to generate funds, while functionaries at the Department of Education expressed that the selling of grades to students teaches them the wrong lesson. A parent Council from the Rosewood school in Goldsboro requested the idea after it had failed to generate revenue during the past year through the selling of chocolates. The school will sell 20 points for each test for each student at a cost of \$20. The students could buy 10 points extra for each of two exams of their choice. Principals Susie Shepherd said that this would do very little to change the general academic average of the students. (EFE News, in El Nuevo Día, 2009, p. 60)

We can interpret various messages from this piece of news: the pillars of the school communities—the parents associations and the teachers—share a utilitarian and mercantilist vision of development and the learning of the student; the administration of the school, in clear abandonment, expresses it will make no difference because the levels of achievement remain poor, and so remaining inperceivable, the principal comes up with the mindless idea of placing a mercantilist and capitalist exchange above the value of learning.

Reinvention Must Meet Hope

Here they speak with words that we understand and they answer our questions; this is what a young adult of 18 years told me in a small school where she tries to make a difference with what is commonly called “school dropouts”. How does a small school can move and transform so many parts that results in positive outcomes? That is what is done in the small school. Taking advantage of its size and participants, it is managed to move and create spaces for the practice of pedagogy in (e)motion. The movement does not cease, is in constant motion, and produced

by the students and learners that have in many other contexts failed. These students represent for me what I have called “disillusioned students” and not school deserters (in Spanish) or “dropouts” (in English). From the very category of dropout the student is treated as an object, a thing. As expressed by a student in one of the small schools carefully thought for the disillusioned students, “Here my questions are answered and they let me continue to question”. On many an occasion this engagement with adults that are capable of understanding the power of the question, and adolescence that have been abandoned by the educational system, becomes a space of acceptance, pleasure, and trust. For them the process of learning and teaching is the power to question, to be listened to, and understood. This takes them toward a connectedness with the school as a space with a secure context. When a student feels accepted, supported, respected, and with the certainty that he or she can trust others, possibility flourishes. Epistemic beings with rights and responsibilities are capable of producing plot and knowledge. Beings that will become our salvation or are vulnerabilities and for whom we must promote their talents and capacities that today signifies the difference between life or death (Pascual Morán, 2007), because when a young deserter engages in the world of the illicit, the possibilities of being murdered by age 20 are terribly high.

In a small inner-city nontraditional schools for dropouts in metropolitan area of Puerto Rico (Irizarry, Quintero, & Pérez-Prado, 2006) similar results were found when asking students about the most important characteristics of the school’s climate. Exploring the perception of the participants about themselves was an arduous task, given the difficulty that they had to identify their own personal qualities, and aspects of themselves that they would like to change or improve and yet, once they began to mention the characteristics that best describe them, identify positive qualities, like responsible, respectful, trustworthy, friendly, and loving, things changed. The difficulty that these participants had to identify their own qualities and personal aspects for changing an improvement leaves us with the necessity to promote confidence, or better yet to reinstate the confidence that they have lost or misplaced, and in part, even to their own educational experiences that have apparently disengaged them from themselves. We should be quite preoccupied with the fact that still we must overcome the position that guilt or fault for failure resides simply in the community and instead develop in our youth a sense of responsibility that is shared so that resilience may flourish; it is not a matter of blaming the environment alone that allows us to survive. We must rescue the lessons that our environment provides us and promote a reinvention of our communities. According to the dialogues with these young deserters, they do not see their communities as sources of support and instead appear more as sources of violence and conflict. Is not the youth that desert, instead are the canons of the school that displace them.

Epilogue: The 3Rs

The three “R”s: resilience, resistance, and reinvention. Three necessary tools and attitudes to confront and to struggle as critical and sensible teachers. These tools

and attitudes can be culturally inherited only by the interconnection with our history and the problematization of the present in spite of looking to the future with hope. According to De Souza (2005, 1999) we can construct scenes imagining the future, and analyzing the present, which is the only moment that we can actually change. We think and generate ideas with an emotional brain, a brain that is thinking and feeling, and is cognitive and filled with motion and emotion, connecting theory and practice in a mental form. To reinvent our practice is to be humble with our own limitations and generous with our talents. Teacher preparation programs may not be as envisioned as must be in promoting such talents in teachers. We must reinvent our challenges and put forth in these as objectives; reinvent space and relations in order to move among these; “being lefts in a world of rights,” appears a certainty. To achieve this teachers must be protagonists, not invisible silhouettes. Contrary to popular belief that should not “let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,” bridges communicate and make viable that which seems impossible, difficult, and natural. The hand of the bow and the hand of violin, both make the violins’ speech, without both parts there is no music; without conservatism and liberalism there is no debate, there is no struggle nor the construction of conciliatory postures; the major and the minor, the straight and the twisted. . . and many other ideas that designate extremes, opposites, differences, or symmetry, concordance, engagement, and collaboration. This metaphor of the right and left allows me to introduce my ideas about education—that is ideas that should permeate our communities. We must forge an education that allows its self to move in motion that makes viable justice and equity throughout its social institutions. This is a call to generate knowledge, a knowledge that has an affinity with human nature and the world yet to be known. Again, we must transform an education that is supposedly objective, because to not do so is to sacrifice a preoccupation with the subjects that are in and of the world. It’s the ideal of knowledge in education that is to be objective; by consequence we will need to continue to educate for dehumanization and not humanization. In this way all we have left is an administration of knowledge and its movement.

“Good intentions like compassion are good but without knowledge that can be very dangerous”: Dra. Jane Goodall, the primatologist, here argues about commitment with responsibility in a seminar titled “On the Path of Sustainability” conducted at the University of Puerto Rico in November 2009. Obviously, there is a huge difference between ignorance—no access to knowledge generation—and malice. However, knowledge without context does not help either, because that category only makes sense when it is part of the self. Compassion and good intentions are not neutral categories. It is this sense that *having the knowledge* goes hand in hand with the recognition of the material conditions and the historical moment in order to give direction to our efforts. We must remember that as observers in and within, we construct our own biological organization and common domains using language as a compass. It is in social linguistic—in wide spectrum—interactions that we become cognoscenti subjects, in the context of a body colored by emotions (Rodríguez Arocho, 2006). I would like to close this chapter with a brief reflection by Maturana (2002) to glimpse future as the humankind’s deposit or heritage of aspirations for sustainable living:

As observers, in the observation and explanation, we can say that all we organize lives its life as a history of structural change [from the Latin *structure* – meaning construction] that is contingent upon the sequence of its interactions, and that this living a history of structural change of the nervous system is contingent upon the course of the historical interactions of the organism (2002, p. 180).

Notes

1. Presented on printed materials at workshops for public system teachers, on Summer 2007, titled *Resilience, Heroism and Transformation*.
2. This concept is from Stanley Aronowitz (1988) whose critique of mainstream science helps shape the vision of post-formal thinking or way of thinking. See Aronowitz, S. (1988). *Science as power*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
3. Ms. Eva Rivera, secretary of Foundations in Education Department, was in charge of the transcription. I feel very grateful for her work.
4. I KPE 80-1738: is the Special Education Class Action Suit which has a history of 30 years. Currently the case is in the Monitory Phase.
5. Sandra Zaiter interviewed me in relation to the legislative projects in favor of persons with handicaps. The legislation generated support from the Puerto Rican Independence Party in 2004.
6. Dr. Fernando Picó is a full professor in history, at the Humanities Faculty at the UPR; he is a Jesuit priest since '60 s and in 1990 he launched the Project of University Convicts. He gave the credit to the convicts who had the initiative for this project.
7. In the article titled "Revelado" (revealed). *Diálogo* (2009, November–December), pp 14–15. Is in digital format www.dialogodigital.com
8. The word *caño* referred to a large pond with mangroves which has land areas. The Caño Martín Peña is located in the municipality of San Juan. Approximately eight communities are placed around the *caño*. The eight communities created a Legal Community Trust to protect their properties from gentrification.
9. Teresa and Zulma are invented names, but the stories are real.
10. Juan Ponce de León school is located in the Barrio Juan Domingo, which is located in Guaynabo municipality. The closing of the school responded to urban gentrification plans. The community succeed in rescuing the school for their children.
11. Gestalt is concept and movement in humanistic psychology in the twentieth century. The word has German origin and means totality, formation, configuration, or the "action and organization of parts". The most important researchers were Max Wertheimer (1880–1943), Kurt Koffka (1886–1941), and Wolfgang Kohler (1887–1967). Its most contemporary representative was Fritz Perls.
12. On March 2009 a new emergency law was passed declaring a state of emergency and establishing a Plan for the Fiscal Stabilization to Save the Credit of Puerto Rico.
13. Taken from newspaper *El Nuevo Día*, November 12, 2009, p. 60. www.endi.com

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Chapter 9

Pedagogy of Solidarity: Where Pain Meets Hope

I am what I am because of who we all are.
 Martin Luther King, Jr.

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Solidarity: The Project

A leaf does not move simply because the wind blows, for the wind would not blow if not for the natural harmony in the order of things. And so it is with humanity: “I am what I am because of who we all are”; the words express one’s own constitution as well as our interdependence, one that is spiritual, cultural, and biologically connected with oneself and all. *La Libertad*, in English freedom, is a condition that is created from our experience and understanding of it as a lived potential, unfinished, tangentially defined, created and re-created in the human contexts of our dream to be more, to be better, to move beyond not because there is an end to be conquered, but because our hope dictates that we dare to embrace our dreams as possibilities. In the nature of human culture, freedom becomes a part of that order—perfect or not—of intangibles, of the irrational because freedom has never been contingent upon a cost–benefit calculus of quantifiable probabilities, but instead of the love that as human beings we feel for being more, more than what we are, more for each other. Behind the scars, open wounds, and masks of colonialism and its insidious repression and above the lies, hopelessness, and corruption of the rationalized colonial existence resides hope. This uniquely human attribute is acquired in the contexts of human communion. As neighbors of his humanity, which the Puerto Rican philosopher Eugenio María de Hostos identified as our grand community, we find ourselves with the responsibility of working for hope, nourishing hope, and healing hopelessness. As critical readers of our contexts we recognize our identity and embrace precisely that freedom that allows us to create, re-create, and grow. Nature and its intelligent order provide us the tools that through cultural action allow us to move. The historical-cultural activities that we engage in define our participation in the struggle for liberation from oppression, with the power to forge our lives, destiny, and relations in communion with others. This is part of the meaning behind the following words by the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.: “the self cannot be self without other selves” (2007, p. 35). And the magic behind his expression is to be discovered in the sacrifice, the commitment, the love, and the hope exemplified by those who embracing this message dare to live beyond them for the “us” that awaits its awakening each one. This is what I mean when I refer to pain meeting hope; when our emotions and thoughts move as one. Inseparable, they become the recipe capable of launching the greatness in each of us. Separated, feeling and reason then repel one another, mediated by fear and a fixation with the self. Hope is then dwarfed and possibility is truncated by our inability to love and to authentically believe in ourselves and other selves (Freire, 1993).

This complex experience which I call pedagogy of solidarity must be understood from a Vygotskian historical cultural optic and a Freirean critical pedagogical perspective. Our trajectory is both biological and biographical. Our lives are registered in the biography that is also biocultural. The parameters of that defined as natural causation and those defined as cultural or nurturing in context are very difficult to determine, and so equity must be applied to the consideration of each in as much as these are relied upon for an explanation of a human phenomena. This chapter embraces a position that accepts the complexity of these two dimensions

of our humanity. We are biological beings, but we are also products and producers, the pages and the authors of our cultural realities. This chapter speaks about many interconnected events which portray the pedagogy of solidarity as daring for radical love and political consciousness in a higher education institution in the context of a colonized country. These recollected memories account for the organized support embodied in the *Unidad de Personas y Recursos de Apoyo y Solidaridad* (UPRASO) created in 1997 by professors, students, and other university employees and friends after the arrest of my colleague, Dr. José Solís Jordán.

Ruptures That Multiply Efforts in the Halls of the Academia

“The wakeup call”

Thursday, November 6, 1997, San Juan, Puerto Rico:

Some 20 heavily armed federal agents including FBI, ATF, and others arrest Dr. José Solís Jordán in his home at 5:40am. He was forced to strip off his clothes in front of his children. The professor is sequestered in the federal building by agents of the FBI. For over five hours he is interrogated with no access to his lawyer. After some 13 hours a federal Judge Magistrate ordered his release under a \$20,000 bail. As of that moment UPRASO (Committee of Persons and Resources of Support and Solidarity) is founded.

The strength of our efforts constructing pedagogy of solidarity and hope was to be found in the production of ruptures that forged new spaces for struggle and for a comprehension of the political-historical and moral-spiritual dimensions of our work as educators, as cultural workers, as critical and thinking human beings. While university or academic life projects itself differently than the mainstream, it is no less fearful of its own vulnerabilities. Shielded by the discursive activities of the canon and rationalized by a self-perpetuating *raison d’ être* as it is, the convergence of ideas in the university becomes at once a challenge and a balancing act between tolerance, change, and transformation; the last option, clearly, imposing the greatest consequences. Puerto Rican nationalist leader, and himself a political prisoner for 25 years, Rafael Cancel Miranda has expressed that “repression is exacted proportionally, the more resistance, the harder the effort, the greater the repression and brutality.” In the university, we are faced with the reality of a grand contradiction: living within a marketplace of ideas, socialization, professional preservation, and change—change that can lead to radically democratic transformation. Writer Audrey Lorde reminds us that we cannot use the Masters tools to build a different home. And so while the trajectory of academe, and university life in particular, is seen as a place where diversity of ideas can engage, the reality of the extent to which that engagement contributes to authentic radical change is kept in check by the very nature of the university as an exclusive institution, and in the case of Puerto Rico, one more often than not underscoring the status quo. This truth in the face of our work as a committee of both hope and solidarity proved a truly pedagogical challenge, and profoundly human risk. And it was this difficulty; it was this challenge that we took on catapulting hope to another level; a level that revealed to us where our strengths really lie.

This is why the ruptures are so important to elevating the human quality in academe. As social philosopher José Miguel Rodríguez (2006) expressed in his work, “the university is a rupture and creation” which

... transcends traditional paradigms that objectify human nature, b) contains spiritual guy mentions and attributes, c) suggests the mechanisms for articulating those dimensions in an agenda that is transformative that confronts the forces that threaten its autonomy, and d) comprehends epistemological, structural and attitudinal ruptures, as general categories (pp. 172–173).

From this proposal I want to rescue the concept of *rupture*, which to my understanding, translates into the fury and passion in Rodríguez’s aspirations and affirmations. This metaphorical translation is inscribed in the process that opened as it broke with conventionalisms among the professors in the context of this political fact, arduous and “something new” in the hallways of the Puerto Rican academia in the twenty-first century. Even though the academia has been more exposed than most persons to the historical literature regarding the political history of our country, it is not strange nor odd that many academics not know well the political history of Puerto Rico or for that matter the relationship between their educational work as cultural workers in a colony and the persecution of those that struggle for the national liberation of Puerto Rico from a variety of positions, strategies, and tactics. The arrest of Dr. Solís, the accusations that he conspired against the U.S. government and his work as a critical pedagogue was understood by some, confused others, and marginal to many. But this was a starting point. The bottom line is that we live in a colony and that colonialism is, according to international law, a crime against humanity. It is not unacceptable lifestyle for the human community. It is not considered a political option, a social option among the dignified states of the world. And so, in the colony you can educate to reproduce, to perpetuate, and to preserve the colony; or you can educate to be free. The decision to educate for freedom is both reason and felt—it resides in the state of the *sentipensante mind* (the fusion between thought and feeling). This is a place where what is felt does not take a backseat to what is thought; instead it engages in a dialogue, in a struggle, in a debate. This is a place where what is thought does not take a second seat to the heart, to what is felt. The resolution of these two is made self-evident in the act of hope, where hope is not an abstraction, not a condition. Here hope becomes a verb, where one submits one’s love for us above one’s own self-interest. That is, self-interest is abandoned and one begins to see the self as other and vice versa.

From the halls of the academia we can see how connections are made between development for progress and development for sustainability. According to De Souza (2005) sustainability implies cultivating—in a continued and coherent form—the conditions that generate and perpetuate life, avoiding erosion of our biodiversity, or cultural diversity, and of the relations that guarantee existence—with well-being—for all “modes of life” on the planet, which vary contextually: ecological, cultural, economic, political, institutional, etc. Solidarity, then, represents hope embedded into multiple reflections, dialogues with colleagues, liaisons, the development of documents which speak about the multiple experiences, emotional and political ruptures and public activities which multiplied providing a wonderful

opportunity for pedagogy in e(motion), capable of transcending neoliberal assumptions of local and international politics. As psychologist Dr. Quijano said,

Empathy, solidarity, union, true friendship represented the lived experience with the Solís case. The José Solís situation became ours. The diversity of political ideologies among the members of the group was no impediment instead it became the evidence of a commitment that we had for the well being of our colleague, in the midst of the pain. A preparation and learning was what this case also represented for me. I did not know it then, but soon I would see myself involved in a similar situation as a result of a federal case against my husband. Experience lived UPRASO gave me the valuable tools that, together with my Christian faith, permitted me to confront this difficult test.

This occasion provided the space to transcend the mere narrative of the story and to make or write history itself. In the Freirean programs of popular education, critical reflection flows from the storyline of daily life, especially in the face of oppression and suffering (Schipani, 2002). This focus privileges experience as a narrative¹ in the contacts of a prophetic instance that involves hope and resistance. That is why this work could not be done from the perspective of my own individual memory, and instead I was compelled to seek the voices of my colleagues with whom I lived this pedagogy of solidarity. This has to be seen from a commitment with the collective dreams that are framed in the context of an international political issue given the status of Puerto Rico as a colony under U.S. rule since 1898. On December 2007 under the administration of George W. Bush, U.S. President's Task Force affirmed that Puerto Rico's constitutional status as a "territory" was subject to the plenary authority of the U.S. Congress under the Territorial Clause of the U.S. Constitution "to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory. . . belonging to the United States" (Presidential Task Force, 2007, p. 5).

The difficulty of digesting Puerto Rico's colonial issue in Puerto Rico is no less difficult in academe. Resistance to colonialism, denouncing colonialism, speaking out against colonialism, and organizing against colonialism were swiftly, insidiously, and that time secretly repressed. . . severely repressed. Thus, the situation of the unexpected arrest of Dr. Solís, the lack of evidence, and the presence of a paid federal informant, for many, became simply a matter of "those radical separatists," and others did provoke fear, but for many more it became a matter of human rights, more than anything giving the procedural failures of the case. This factor brought many people together to participate. Conservatives, Liberals, and radicals came together in support. The respect for human dignity and ideological differences—is a central source of emotions for the mobilization of the imagination, of human commitment and power, because without emotion there is no passion, and without passion there is no commitment, as expressed by DeSouza (2005).

We were organized to mobilize so many minds from different points on the sociocultural spectrum.² Surely, no one perceives persecution as something that is okay; even less so political persecution. This was perceived as such. Many people contributed quietly, many gave more than they could give. Those who wore strong patriotic sentiments, those were simply nonaffiliated sympathizers, those who contributed simply for reasons of natural altruism or religiousness, but I don't know what, all supported the effort. But we manage to bring these folks together. And we did promptly. Many persons contributed economically on a monthly basis as individuals. The best part of it: the army of people who committed. (Dr. Carlos Ramírez, personal communication Jan, 2010)

My November 6, 1997, a warning, the arrests in the future came together in the form of questions. And now what are you going to do? What movements will you make in order to help your colleague? How are you going to use this experience ontologically? These became fundamental in my affirmation about where I was going to move and how. I did not have a plan, but I did make a commitment and I knew the plan would be born of that principle. I did not have a map to follow, but I had an ethical compass and political clarity. The map too would be born of the process. The following poem, the initial and cardinal point of departure for me on the journey, I shared with a small seminar under the direction of Dr. De los Reyes at the Graduate School of Education of Harvard University:

I re-learned
I learn to hit my friend
If he hits me first

I learned to feel fear of the strongest
But I respected him if he protected me

I learned to pray
Because it is synonymous with being Christian

I learned to respect
the authority of the tyrant because “we are too small.”

I learned to repeat to hymn
of my “colonized country.”

But . . . upon unlearning all of the above
I learned to love my friend for simply being there always

I learned that respect does not protect
And that strength and fear can coexist

And in that Christ was a revolutionary
In his times and for that he was condemned to death

I learned that the smallness of the tyrant
is his authority and his prison

I learned to sing my battle hymn
to do battle, and to dream freedom.

Nellie, November 10, 1997
Boston, Massachusetts

To recognize affectively what José’s situation means, as a Puerto Rican and militant for national liberation, and the meaning of this case in the context of Puerto Rico’s history, and my understanding as the Puerto Rican in political and ethical-spiritual terms became a curriculum of profound proportions. This all then became a cry of hope. . . because I really learned, in a moment of profound reflection and pain, to understand transformational experience as it emanates from the very personal and collective struggles of peoples’ hopes. The calls connected us bringing everyone closer together and becoming that which wove our hope and made it grow more in the sense of our solidarity and active participation. In an ontological sense, participation is inclusion of the parts in all; in another social sense, to participate is

synonymous with taking part in a collective experience (to be a part of) (González Ortiz, 2004). It is that action of *taking part* and *forming a part of* that define the epistemological and practical parameters of *effective participation*. It is not sufficient then to *take part* but instead to participate effectively by *becoming a part*. The ruptures were good and necessary.

The Political Prisoner: The Person

Friday, March 12, 1999; Chicago, Illinois, USA:

Verdict: guilty. The judge ordered the courtroom be vacated for the reading of the verdict because the jury felt “intimidated” by the presence of many Puerto Ricans and others who supported Dr. Solís. His belongings were taken from him as he was taken to Chicago’s federal prison in the Metropolitan Correctional Center (MCC). José was not allowed to say goodbye to his family. He was immediately stripped of his clothes and put into a green jumpsuit. The color of the suit indicated that he was marked as a dangerous prisoner and so headed for solitary confinement. Two days later he was allowed a visit of only minutes with his wife. Between that date and Father’s Day weekend of 2000 Dr. Solís was confined to the Special Housing Unit (SHU), otherwise known as solitary confinement or the “hole”. On occasion, he would be removed and placed in different prisons and county jails. For 23 hours a day during this time he was in his eight by six foot cell. On Mondays Wednesdays and Fridays he was given one half hour to do exercise in a room some 4’ × 6’. On Tuesdays and Thursdays he was taken to a shower stall. So on the days he did exercise he could not bathe. The cell was painted white. There were no windows. There was absolutely no way of knowing what day or what time it was. No one spoke to him. He had no access to books or other reading materials. If and when he was offered something to read by the prison staff, it was usually fragmented, incomplete, or damaged, making the reading more frustrating and difficult. He was to be a recipient of behavior modification tactics (psych-ops) through sensory deprivation. He was given numerous breakfast plates during all hours of the day in an attempt to have him lose sense of time. The breakfast plates included a small plate of cold grits, one piece of white bread, and 4 ounces of cold coffee. The light in his prison cell remained lit 24 hours a day. The temperature of the cell was kept uncomfortably cold and Dr. Solís was offered no more than two sheets with which to cover him. He was alone accompanied by the stainless steel, cement, and silence that embraced him. I wrote a letter to Amnesty International Puerto Rico chapter, who in turn sent a situation letter to the Amnesty International headquarters in London.

The philosophy behind the U.S. federal government would have people believe that political prisoners do not exist in United States prison system. The U.S. Federal Bureau of Prisons (FBOP) knows that political prisoners exist and so they reserve “special treatment” for those prisoners considered political prisoners. Political prisoners are not criminals. This is clear to the FBOP and to the U.S. federal government. And so they are assigned a more fear-provoking tag: that of being called “terrorists” or “subversives.” A political prisoner is considered an enemy. This becomes an easy way to deny, reject, and even criminalize the message of the political prisoner. By so doing, any possibility of dialogue, any possibility that their message might be legitimate or valid is quickly disregarded; and just as quickly, criminalized. Experience taught José that prison is not about rehabilitating. He would share with many people the following thought by the philosopher Jiddu

Krishnamurti: “It is no measure of health to be well adjusted to a profoundly sick society.” “Prison” Dr. Solís once expressed in an interview with a religious leader, “is a place of pain.” The prisoner is punished. The prisoner is dehumanized. The prisoner is humiliated. The prisoner is reminded that he or she is less and that the only way out is to embrace what lies on the other side of the wall. The only life for the prisoner becomes a prison life unless the prisoner is able to stand back a little bit and to see the prison for what it is: an attempt to break the person. To be treated like an animal, worse than an animal, the prisoner must behave as such. So the challenge becomes embracing your humanity, and yes, searching deep, very deep and looking to embrace the humanity of those that would want to break you. This becomes a revolutionary act in the prison. All the while, the prison system would have you become completely dependent on it. This is why so many return. But then again, such dependency is not the exclusive domain of prisons. Transformation means breaking the chains of bondage that disallow for human freedom. These chains also exist in academe.

José’s life³ always had the necessary materials with which to project in him responses with respect to different elements of national and cultural identity, ethnic and racial struggles, and civil responsibility and solidarity. His father was a chief in the U.S. Navy and as is the case with military families moving from bases to bases and states to states, he too was offered the experiences and exposure to diverse educational curricula. He witnessed the 1965-Watts riots in Los Angeles. The home where his parents, sisters, and he lived became the target of a racial-KKK type fire. In the third grade, he decided to fly. Along with his friend Ricky Sutton, José trained. Jumping rope, doing calisthenics, and preparing a lane (a kind of runway) that ended on the edge of a canyon rim became his mantra. And so he took to the air . . . and landed hard. In the hospital, the attending physician reminded José that humans can’t fly and that he was old enough to know that. José asked the doctor if he had ever tried. The doctor quickly assured José “of course not, I know better.” To this José replied, “Then what do you know?” The doctor’s last thought was “and one day he will fly.”

Schools and the Pedagogy of Conscientization: A Political Project

While in high school at Fort Buchanan in San Juan, Puerto Rico, José Solís organized numerous classmates in a struggle with the school and the U.S. military base to fly the Puerto Rican flag since the presence of the American flag stood alone, and he and others demanded that being on Puerto Rican soil the least the school could do was to fly the Puerto Rican flag also. On the issue of just raising a flag, the moment became one of collective conscience at that level of his social and cognitive development as an adolescent. After receiving his bachelor’s degree, he taught courses in music, social studies, history, and English as a second language in different schools, both public and private. He also helped to organize immigrant Mexican students and their families in their efforts to reclaim their educational rights and to rescue opportunities that were due to them. For this he was fired as a teacher from

one school in the state of Colorado. His teaching experiences took him to many places as an educator, as a cultural worker, and as a political activist. Dr. Solís has shared his knowledge and caring from Chicago to the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico, from universities on both coasts of the United States to the Dominican Republic, Central America, and Cuba. In 1987, José witnessed firsthand the revolution and repression in El Salvador where he spent some time learning and sharing pain and hope. In 1994, Dr. Solís was awarded the distinction of the *Excellence in Teaching Award* from DePaul University. In fact, he was the first non-Anglo male to receive this award at the university. José also worked with the curriculum reform at Roberto Clemente high school in Chicago. The list of his accomplishments goes on, embracing him and projecting his pedagogy of hope and transformation; and like a steady thermal draft taking him to higher heights. So yes, he did fly!

In 1995 he began his work in the Educational Foundations Department of the College of Education at the University of Puerto Rico. After his arrest in November of 1997, he offered numerous lectures at different universities around the United States while continuing his pedagogical work at the University of Puerto Rico and simultaneously complying with pretrial hearings in the federal courts of Chicago. We organized an interdisciplinary talk at the Graduate School of Education at Harvard University where I participated as a visiting professor. It was precisely those cultural interconnections that we nourished and Dr. Solís' lecture titled *Toward a Pedagogy of Solidarity: A Story of the Wounds of Colonialism* that continued to fuel our resolve. That same year, 1998, as Puerto Rico commemorated the Centennial of the U.S. invasion and occupation, volume 68 of the Harvard Educational Review, titled *Colonialism and Working-Class Resistance: Puerto Rican Education in the United States*, made a special dedication to José. One year later, our colleague, friend, and distinguished educator, Peter McLaren (2001) together with José published the article/interview titled *The Struggle for Liberation! La Lucha Continua! José Solís Jordán's Fight for Justice*.

Writing has always been one of Dr. Solís' good friends. And so, from the prison, and when afforded the opportunity, he wrote and wrote. He published numerous articles, conference presentations, reviews, and many letters. He wrote from the heart to the hearts of his family and friends, sons and daughters, wife, and students. The gentle, caring, and warmth of José, the political prisoner who loved profoundly, was to be easily found in his writings and letters. The following is a letter that he wrote to my daughter on her second birthday:

Dear Aura:

Your life is beginning while mine is being transformed. You are evidence of the love and of human possibility. You are the hope that blossoms from faith. I have your picture next to that of my children, and that is the way it should be. When you were born and spent many days celebrating and happy. I was grateful and walking back and forth in my cell I celebrated. Love is the greatest thing in this life. It is capable of overcoming the greatest and deepest pain; capable of overcoming the most impossible challenge; capable of making the impossible a reality. This I am learning thanks to the struggles and to the love of those who love like you, your mother, and your father. God bless you.

While he was imprisoned, José's voice would find its way into many national and international conferences. Dr. Solís would send his presentations through the mail and we would share these lectures with the attending audiences. He kept constant contact with his students at the University of Puerto Rico. While in prison, and once able to work, the prison assigned him the task of teaching courses in the GED program. He received letters and certificates of distinction for having helped more men get their high school diplomas in 1 year than the total graduated in the seven previous years. José organized poetry recitals, taught a Spanish class in an equipment storeroom in his unit, and by invitation from a prison manager, created a curriculum for the prison system based on the James Allen book, *As a man Thinketh*. Dr. Solís was also a special and invited guest speaker for 2 years during Black history month at the Coleman Federal Correctional Complex in the state of Florida. On a lighter note, after his presentation in 2002, and in the presence of hundreds of prisoners at the activity, José was officially claimed an honorary "African man," a distinction he embraces dearly.

A Premonition of the Pain and Suffering: The Beginning

As Dr. Yudkin, Director of the UNESCO Chair at the University of Puerto Rico, wrote some reflections on José's arrest, our solidarity work at the university, the trial, and conviction, she recollected a particular memory that I am using to begin this section. These memories make a connection with the entire process of understanding the arrest and subsequent events.

In the summer of 1997, Dr. Solís, Dr. Zambrana, and I took a trip to Southern California to participate in a conference on qualitative research. After having passed baggage security a worker from the immigration Department, a tall and serious looking man, stopped in front of us to detain us. He spoke in Spanish, asked where we lived. Dr. Zambrana and I looked at each other, and a bit bothered by his presence, we answered: "in Trujillo Alto, Puerto Rico". He continued asking a series of questions waiting for the answers to each. "Have you lived there all your life?" Our colonial reality reared up its head with that experience. Here we were being questioned by federal officer with the power question and detaining us at random in order for us to be able to travel from an airport in our own country. Finally I answered, "He wants us to say that we are American citizens from the United States". He ceased his questions, he moved to the side, and we continued to walk toward the exit. This brief anger and the uncomfortableness that the situation provoked did not have me thinking of the moment as a premonition of things to come. We went and returned from California filled with shared experiences and much learned. Three educators committed to freedom, the freedom of our country, Freireans in our thinking and working to be as such in our practice; we had made new friends in this long trip. We return to the College of education in August, we had prepared multiple activities, including a Congress on educational research to the celebrated the following semester.

History is a call for understanding and reinvention. In 1997, some 99 years after the U.S. invasion and occupation of Puerto Rico, we were reminded, in dramatic

fashion, of the connection between our political status; our professional, intellectual, and pedagogical ideas; and the need to re-create, to reinvent our pedagogy. For some 515 years we have suffered a systematic psychological repression that has engendered fear and a sense of impotence and hopelessness with respect to our own national development and potential. We were the purveyors, the messengers, and subsequently the re-creators of a colonial, psychological, and educational project whose principal objective was to perpetuate the colonial status quo. Our colonial reality does not allow us to engage in commercial treaties with other countries, or for that matter to develop commercial, social, and cultural engagement with the community of nation-states in the world without the authorization of the U.S. Congress (Collado-Schwarz, 2009).

In the book titled *American Colonialism in Puerto Rico: The Judicial and Social Legacy*, Professor Rivera Ramos (2007) explains and thoroughly documents the political situation of the country, portraying the reality from the perspective of its legal context. Historically, in Puerto Rico those who struggle for independence and national liberation have been criminalized and persecuted by both the U.S. federal government and the colonial governments of Puerto Rico. Proof of this was made very clearly when in 2000, FBI Director Louis Freeh admitted that this federal agency had “persecuted independence advocates in Puerto Rico” (Rivera-Ramos, 2007, p. 203). This, however, was not the first time that an agent of the federal government admitted to such practices. As long as colonialism has existed there has existed resistance⁴; and as well, there has existed for many efforts to silence the cries for freedom. And so, in 1952 the truth of Puerto Rico’s colonial status under the nonincorporated territorial clause of the U.S. Constitution would once again be masked, this time to be called “Commonwealth,” or as it is referred to in Puerto Rico, the “Free Associated State of Puerto Rico” (see Trías Monge, 1997). The path for this “change” was cleared with the passage of PL 600 in 1950.

Dr. Solís made this history, its context, and our responsibility as educators very clear to us barely 2 weeks before his arrest in 1997 elections on the need for a decolonized pedagogy in Puerto Rico. And so, the following recollection by Dr. Yudkin illustrates the bitterness of the wake-up call. It seems that he spoke to us as if sensing something was to happen:

... I listen to José speak during the Congress... on the theme of a decolonizing education. Remember the image of his presence, and the strong sense of his words that impacted, challenged, dared, and spoke of being radical. I thought... we have a group of colleagues that can make a difference in our faculty and in the education of our country. A few weeks later we awaken to the news that agents of the FBI, armed with rifles and guns, helicopters and other instruments of their tactics, had surrounded José’s a house during the early morning and threatening to shoot if he did not come out immediately. The memory fills me with anguish and uncertainty. These things still happen? Were not these things of the past in 1976, 1980? How much did we know of what the United States federal government was capable of doing in Puerto Rico? Worse yet, in Chicago, since it happens to be that the accusations were linked to the time he was living and working there.

Conversations and Actions for Possibility: How We Did It, What We Did

According to Magda E. Sagardía, professor of Foundations in Education, the day of the arrest, Dr. Roamé Torres, director of the department, informed us of what had happened. That pressure continued with greater force at the federal courts in San Juan, as the FBI intended that he confess to a crime that he did not commit, linking him to national liberation organizations in Chicago, and expecting that he yield in his principles and values out of the fear of others. Said Sagardía:

My students and members of the student council of the faculty, professors, and non-teaching staff approached me for orientation, especially with respect to the technical legal process. It was Providence that brought Victor Hernández and I together to dialogue about different rapid response alternatives and our immediate need to channel our energies in support of Dr. Solís Jordán in order to neutralize the devastating effects of the news of his arrest. With the consensus of various professors of different political ideologies we prepared and circulated a resolution in support and solidarity with our colleague. The same was unanimously approved a shared throughout the university community as well as the communications media of the country. UPRASO surged spontaneously and genuinely!

UPRASO worked voluntarily to disseminate information, to educate, to donate, and to raise funds for the defense effort. We participated as an organization in many activities in Puerto Rico and Chicago. Given the obvious ideological and political “baggage” of the case, it was decided that we would protect ourselves as a diverse group of faculty members and workers that were not moved by ideological positions as much as the principles of human rights and freedoms (in Sagardía, 1999).

As Professor Sagardía shared: *this was very important in order to contain any attempts on the part of federal authorities in Puerto Rico and the United States to divide us or to shift our focus from the matters at hand. We would not follow the government’s logic of hate.* The university’s academic Senate unanimously endorsed the resolution and its support of Dr. Solís.⁵ The university experience with its struggles for demilitarization, over the increase in tuition, over working conditions and labor disputes, against the violence and repression by the police within the university system and society at large, have left many tracks and many tools that are often called upon to sustain our stamina and push. Some of us who live the strikes, the university’s closures, and confrontation with the forces of “public order” in the past are constantly reminded that repression is a part of colonial life (Nieves-Falcón, Cunningham, Rivera, Torres, & Amundaray, 1982; Seijo-Bruno, 1997); also rudely experienced and reflected in the realities of the university community (Alvarez-Curbelo & Raffucci, 2005).

Solidarity Gets Organized

Terrorism denies the right to justice and to live. As human rights educator Jares (2002) stated, emancipatory education must use methods allied with justice and life. Without organization there can be no mobilization or effective help. We

also received important support from the Puerto Rican Association of University Professors (APPU, in Spanish) at that time presided over by Dr. Jorge Colón. He wrote:

As members of the Council of the APPU collaborated first by informing all of our members about the case. I was very impressed when Nellie informed me that José continue to develop intellectual work while in prison, but he would submit articles for publication on presentation at conferences, and that he gave classes to other prisoners. Surely the federal government kept his body in prison, but they could not silence his spirit or his intellect. We let it be known very clearly to the administration at University that José could count on all of our support in APPU so that his position would remain intact throughout the appellate process. The university administration was both reverent and sensible, and the federal government did not try to defame him.

During that year, UPRASO and APPU would, on many occasions, rely on the media in order to denounce the conditions of Dr. Solís' imprisonment. Together we created a publication and titled it *El Solidario*. The newsletter was meant to keep informed and announced important activities and details, when available, of José's situation throughout the incarceration. We also maintained a close relationship with organizations such as the Comité Pro Excarcelación de los Prisioneros Políticos, as well as the Support Committee in Chicago.

From the many dialogues with Lawyer Beckiel and José, the decision was made to seek a second legal counsel in Chicago. The fundamental purpose of the decision was born of the argument that a lawyer familiar with the dynamics of the federal court system in Chicago might be helpful. Neither Beckiel nor José took this decision lightly since ideologically neither one believes that the U.S. federal government, through its courts, has any moral, ethical, and for that matter, legal jurisdiction over their country colonized by the accusing government. Nevertheless, the decision was made to fight through the court case in an attempt to make the trial a pedagogical moment, an educational forum.

The Pedagogy During the Legal Process (Excerpt by Magda Sagardía)

On numerous occasions in the course of my classes, my students would question different aspects of the legal process, engaging in many discussions on the effects of all this upon the professor and upon the process of teaching and learning itself from the perspective of educational professionals. This I believe is the result of them having identified with the case also because they knew this could happen to almost anyone, anyone in the university, any educator. This case has been a living and valuable example for me, my students in my Social Foundations classes, and former graduate students in my seminars on School Law and Educational Legal Policy. And in spite of the fact that there is no adequate code that permits me to loyally express my feelings about the experiences accumulated during this entire process, and the lessons learned in the broadest sense, and also from the profound and deeply felt attitudes and actions of my colleagues in the university community, I must conclude

that it was all a very personal and professional process of enrichment that revived my faith in certain principles and convictions, in the integrity and dignity of colleagues, and the future of our country and its education, and most certainly its students. Throughout the different stages of the arrests, pretrial, trial and imprisonment of José, I felt for the first time, by being so close to the experience, what on many occasions I had read about, studied, and heard of about the abuses by the repressive agencies of the U.S. federal government against those identified with the struggle for Puerto Rico's national liberation. We lived situations; we felt the reality of what it was like to have a phone call tapped, to have undercover agents roaming about the halls of the College of Education prying into the offices of different departments in a faculty and into the lives of professors identified as supporters of UPRASO. We live the surveillance that we were subjected to, even the parking lots on the campus.

Upon his release from prison, my first encounter with José was in an elevator in the faculty. I noticed that he stood facing the back wall of the elevator, that is to say, with his back to the elevator doors. I stood there utterly confused. With his usual gentleness he explained that as a prisoner at any time he was placed in an elevator he was ordered to face the back wall. He apologized and confessed that he was still readjusting. I could not hide my profound sense of sadness and indignation that overcame me as I was once again reminded of the devastating effects of the process on José and his family. We turned the case of our friend and colleague Dr. José Solís Jordán into an authentic project of communion with the diversity and divergence of a higher set of values and principles, uniting these to the wills and commitment that we all embraced guided by the maxim "to love thy neighbor as thyself."

From the "Art" of Cultural Workers

It was done by my student Miguelangelo, when he learned of the case; that he was capable of creating art not just for an understanding of his "occult" capabilities as a writer an artist, but also for the fact that he donated 12 silkscreened pieces to the fund-raising effort. Other renowned personalities in Puerto Rico did likewise. Such was the case with actor Teófilo Torres,⁶ who offered the proceeds from the presentations of his famous monologue "A mis amigos de la locura" [*To the friends of madness*]; singers-songwriters Roy Brown and Andrés Jiménez, among other musical organizations from Puerto Rico. Anthropologist and author Ramón López donated numerous copies of his book *Pupils' Works: 1898–1903*⁷ to generate funds.

It was Friday the 12th when we were informed about the verdict. I was 8 months pregnant. The following day, Professor Maurás met with me at the College of Education. We both had class on Saturday. We were very saddened, but we decided to keep the solidarity project alive. He was working the night before on an art project. His artistic talents would also become a part of the fund-raising effort. But because art is life and expression it was also a work of cultural importance. As Professor Maurás expressed in the following reflection:

The reason for doing a work that was sufficiently agreeable to the eye, but that the same time would have a pictorial force and significance of content for the purpose at hand and

for José, was in fact a difficult assignment but, at the same time, very pleasant. . . In those days past José and I would find available moments to share our love of the ocean by surfing, an activity that we both enjoyed deeply and plentifully since our youth. . . We had much time to share and for me to understand the great commitment and feelings that we have for our country. . . That is why in my artistic contribution I felt the necessity of concluding the symbol of the flag and. . . the waves of our Borinquen beaches. . . And to try to re-create what it was like to be in the water riding and enjoying the waves that nature had given us. . . ***WE FELT FREE***. . . and so my artistic contribution included the following message: ***Dear friend, remember that they might be able to imprison your body, but there will never be able to imprison your soul or your mind, and even less so your spirit, for it will always be free.***

Multiple Interpretations of the Same Theme

El entierro de los enterradores (*The burial of the gravediggers*)
(Excerpt by Dr. Carlos Ramírez)

The truth is that for reasons that I have yet to understand, our time leaves us no time to communicate amongst one another, not even once in a while. About UPRASO many things can be said and written. In the first case, if I were to pause and reflect about my own theology and praxis of liberation, which at one point I supported during my years of ministry, I have to say that UPRASO became my second praxis and to a lesser degree my second theology. I remember when a parishioner, a young homeless man named Loco de Chin, died. We went to bury him in the municipal cemetery. It was Sunday. The gravedigger was drunk and the grave had not been prepared. We must do it ourselves, beginning with the priest. It was not in my plans, not remotely a part of my mission to dig the grave of a homeless man from a poor barrio in Aibonito. The conviction of José Solís was one of those events that are not planned. We entered the case in a sudden fashion. We had to deal with it. Here however it was not a matter of digging a gravesite for a homeless man, El Loco de Chin, but instead of the gravedigger. My trip to Chicago, to the federal courthouse, experiencing the process, the façade of American patriotism was a unique experience for me. What a moment it was to observe how millions of dollars are spent on nothing; to make noise. It did not even serve to alter the spirit of those who believe something else. My contribution was also unexpected. Together, and little by little, we dug a grave of the gravedigger. It isn't an easy task to bury those who would seek to bury the Locos de Chin. To you, the organizers of UPRASO, my felicitations. As for me, what can I say? I felt that I was a part of exquisite event; and historical event.

“Seamos patriotas del amor” (Let Us Be Patriots of Love)

On the Monday of the following week many students asked. . . surprised, desolate, and moved. . . All of our colleagues also suffered by the sentencing of our friend and compatriot. But we had long since made the decision to forge ahead with valor

and hope. We had to continue with our semesters work and we had to give a broader meaning to our frustration in order to take it to the next level of action. We knew that most likely the charge of “conspiracy” would stand, as has historically been the case of Puerto Rican independentistas charged by the U.S. federal government (Bosque-Reyes & Colón, 1997; Rivera Ramos, 2007). We moved, with sorrow and frustration, but moved also by an ethical responsibility. Dr. Yudkin recalled:

On the day of the reading of the sentence we were not at the university. We received the news by telephone and I recall a great feeling of heaviness in my heart. We left our homes, Nellie, her new baby, Aura, and I headed for a demonstration of solidarity in front of the United States federal court building in San Juan. Together with approximately 30 other persons we demanded justice for José, also became a demonstration in support of all of our political prisoners. José Had been declared guilty on the basis of a government paid “rat for hire”, a group of FBI agents testified that José was dangerous and to imagine what it would be like to have a child killed by an explosive. It was a fine tuned script, one that while marching in the demonstration, I could visualize in my mind on the basis of what they had said. We would no longer have José among us for quite a while, even though there was talk of appeals and other legal possibilities. This battle—in the legal forum—was lost.

José’s letter to friends
Metropolitan Correction Center (MCC Federal), Chicago, IL

My dear people:

Today I will be ordered to complete a prison sentence. If of anything I am guilty, it is as being an educator. The transcendent and sad part of this entire case is that in the judgment rests upon the shoulders of a disgraceful education system. While the education system in Puerto Rico fears a dialogue about our reality, we find ourselves spilling the tears of injustice in Vieques. While education ignores our history, we are condemned to continue a life paralyzed, because history does not repeat itself, it insists on the resolution of its contradictions. While education separates the texts and its material from morality, injustice and violence will continue. While education speaks of political decolonization without attending to the decolonization of the self, we as Puerto Ricans will continue to assume that we can be colonize nation without the colonizing our own existence. While education assumes that its principal purpose is to prepare us to be consumers, some youth will opt for making consumption the reason for their education and the acquisition of material things as the natural order. While education separates social and economic development from what is culture; while we continue to pretend that the politics of the people and their citizenship are two different things, while we continue unable or unwilling to differentiate between “being” and “being like”, we will be incapable of respecting ourselves and others, and will continue to live in fear.

Let us cease being objects. Let us be patriots of love. Let our education contribute to the conscientization of our people and of the colonizer; because we too must contribute, to our decolonization to the decolonization of the colonizer. I am not here to cry out in protests against the colonizer. I am here to proclaim and reaffirm our love for our land, our people, and our humanity. This implies recognition of the humanity of the colonized and the possibility that the colonizer can be more. This let us proclaim our human rights; our dream to be more. Let us recognize that to be more human we need to be better Puerto Ricans, for it is our home, our context that nourishes our bodies, our souls, and our spirits. Let us forge an authentic and humanizing education. Let us reaffirm that the human context has everything to do with the construction of our own humanity. That is to say, to be Puerto Rican is not merely the product of our imagination, but also a process determined by the thousands of factors that define our particularity, all differences, and our contexts among other peoples.

Let us declare just poor words inscribed on the plaque at the entrance to the federal building in San Juan, those words from the Bill of Rights and the Constitution of the United States: “it is that all men are created equal”. Let us show them that they do not have to violate their own constitution and the international laws that govern the community of nations in order to be great. Let us teach them that the greatness does not depend on the power that they had to impose, instead that it depends on the moral force and just judgments that they are capable of effecting. Let us teach them that what we do here today is precisely that which done and that gave birth to that plaque and those principles. Let us forge a humanized and decolonized education.

Interview with José Solís

The birth and evolution of a pedagogy of solidarity, its value of a human level, and what it took to make it happen, to forge this unique curriculum that would reach to many people of different ideologies and educate them all, but managed to reinvigorate the feelings and emotions of the thoughts of those that were convinced that she would be found innocent of the charges was an education in itself. After some 10 years, the space in this book becomes a great pretext for its own outlining. As you announced in a letter that you mailed to me on November 20, 1999, “it might be a good idea to document our dialogues and maybe even publish them. . .” José, let’s talk about the day after your arrest:

First Thoughts

JS⁸: The arrest was, for me, not the strongest blow, when one commits to struggle—to national liberation struggle—one knows that consequences await. The consequences can be very serious. But the dominant consideration is not about consequences, and if it is, it’s more about the consequences of not doing enough, of knowing how the political machine, how the cultural machine, how colonialism functions at the macro and micro levels and pretending that somehow all of this can be overcome through a vote, the reading of the book, or just speech. The difficulty of the arrest came after the arrest. I was not concerned for myself as much as for those close to me. I thought, “we live in a colony, we are supposed to struggle against colonialism, and this has its consequences.” I hoped that family, friends, and colleagues would understand this well. I wanted them to be comfortable, at ease. It was like I told the FBI: “this is ironic. In the name of democracy and freedom to arrest and handcuff those who fight for freedom, those who are anti-colonialism. You do not arrest nor handcuff the colonized because the seed of fear that you sow in them becomes the bars of their own self-constructed prisons.” I remember seeing the director of our department deeply moved by the circumstance. I recall how Professor Sagardía proposed that the faculty meeting agenda on that day be changed in order to attend to the matter of my arrest. What came out of that is nothing less than phenomenal. Before the FBI could manipulate the message of my arrests throughout the country’s media, university colleagues, friends, and many others took to the media with their interpretations of the arrest. Freire would often speak to us of the importance of the process. In the context of our political struggle in Puerto Rico, a federal case against an anti-colonialist is not necessarily won in the courtroom of the Federal Department of Justice. This would almost seem ironic. It is, however, the case that the process with which and by which we face and confront such a façade will define

victory inasmuch as the principles and values remain intact. And so, my deepest hope was that my colleagues, friends, and others would, through the process, grow and strengthen in their convictions as humans in defense of freedom.

NZ: That in itself was a rupture toward a pedagogy of hope and solidarity because there's nothing more important at the moment than attending to the situation that will define us. The faculty begins to define itself before the reading, a reading of what has in front of itself, a political reading, and educational reading that in part includes the ways in which the media manages the message and how this impacts our students, our senses, and our own beliefs.

JS: We are very much contextual. Sadly, we had to refuse to see, understand, and critically read our contacts, or our fears of consequences help us to rationalize our ignorance or to legitimize our fear.

NZ: So they decide who the enemy is. They assign the labels, write the libretto, and carry out the task according to their interests. What is behind this?

JS: Actually this is nothing new. And sadly, very few Puerto Ricans really understand the history of the country and to a much lesser degree the history and lives of those who have fought to be free. This was in fact one of the foundational dilemmas that I faced as an educator in the wake of my arrest. I know that many or most people, even the most educated in our country are ignorant of our reality, our history, it's legal, and social implications. Being visited by the FBI; being persecuted by the FBI; being attacked by the FBI is absolutely nothing new for anyone who has struggled against the United States' colonial regime in Puerto Rico. So I thought that my arrest was going to shake a lot of people. And while this was, as I mentioned, a great concern, I only wished that I had had the time to engage with everyone to let them know that I was okay; and that anyone who struggles against a colonial regime is clear about what can happen. I really think what happens to many of us is that we believe that somehow colonialism will go away; or that maybe one day enough of us will vote it away; or that somehow, someone, somewhere, anyone but us free us at little or no cost. And this is why we are still a colony. We have learned to rationalize struggle as if it were a mathematical calculation to be measured and determined according to a cost-benefit analysis. So if I know that the consequence of doing A is X then I can decide the appropriate recourse and calculate whether or not the risk is worth it. But when you struggle because you love, there is no calculation, there is but one motivation and it is human liberation, an inalienable right. And so, when we decide that the status quo is intolerable, un-acceptably intolerable, then prison, or the fear of consequences will stand far behind the urgent need to be free.

NZ: You mentioned it as if announcing that our fear paralyzes us. But we moved. The dream moved but none believes would fall, instead understand why they were there. This reminds me of the famous book by Leo Buscalia, *The Fall of Freddie the Leaf*⁹ and its metaphors on death and the cyclical movement of life.

JS: Yes, I did mention that I believed that in the course of the trial and subsequent time leaves would fall from that metaphorical tree of support and solidarity. But the statement was meant to be applied as a broader stroke to the process of educational transformation and of the meaning of that transformation as it related to what we were living through my case. I believe the evidence is very prevalent today in Puerto Rico. We are suffering from a pain that more than any other person, any other country, any other government we inflict upon ourselves, and this I believe is because we are afraid. As expressed to me by Neville Alexander upon quoting his comrade, Nelson Mandela, "we fear our own potential for greatness." And so, before, during, and after the trial and sentence I would be asked to speak and meet with all kinds of people from all walks of life. Why? I think, because they were curious. Curious about the possibility that they could get a little closer to their own potential, to sensing their own authenticity, their own greatness, their own beauty; and that I might be able to remind them of that possibility. Everything everywhere became an education; became a reaffirmation of my communion with the world that I knew could become more, and that began with my contribution to the struggle for our freedom.

NZ: And that classroom... was also accomplished through the efforts realized by UPRASO. We were there. We carried the message, a pronouncement. It was more than a pronouncement, more than discourse... It was new, a new lesson... A new classroom that transcended the prison walls.

JS: I have many anecdotes. There is much to be said for how we are raised. For example, my father had little tolerance for the expression, "I can't." He would tell my sisters and I, from as far back as I can remember, "tell me you don't know how, tell me you don't want to, but never say you can't." Likewise when this chapter in our lives arrived I remember vividly the conversation I had with him. All he said was, "be true to yourself, to what you believe in, to what you live for. This is the mark of integrity. This is what makes a man." We were taught that respect was not something reserved for those who agreed with us. Our respect for the world spoke of who we were, a factor not dependent upon how others treated us nor saw us. And so when I entered the prison system, showing respect to all prisoners, two guards, to the administration, and to any and all whom I encountered was all I needed. We were all humans. I have often shared with my students my profound belief that it is love that motivates our struggle. And, that as educators, as cultural workers, and as persons committed to social transformation we must work hard to eliminate the following three words from our lives: hate, impossible, and enemy. Why? Because none of these three words yields positive and potential transformation. Furthermore, those who most suffer the effects of those three words are those that live by them, and those that were called someone their enemy, something impossible, and something or someone worth hating. As Paulo Freire reminded us, only the oppressed can free themselves; and only the oppressed can free the oppressor. And so, believing in the national liberation of Puerto Rico is profoundly about human liberation, about a transformation, ours and theirs.

Reducing the Human Tissue to Trash vs Pedagogy in (E)Motion

NZ: And this, I understand, is another rupture, because if there is something that the prison system pretends to do is to diminish your capacity to have a plan, an agenda, a vision and imagination while imprisoned. You took it all in as a challenge. And as an educator you believe to responsibility was to overcome, and that overcoming meant living within the context of your reality and nothing less; not against anyone, but in favor of possibility.

JS: The struggle for national liberation is very difficult. Those that many would call the enemy are still our brothers, as humans, as potential, in as much and as hard as it may seem they too must become a positive part of the transformation. Anything else simply turns us into them. The goal can never be to become like them, to substitute one tyranny in favor of another. This may explain in part why struggle, and prison as a part of that, may seem so hard for so many. Because incarceration is also another forum, another space from which, and within which national liberation takes place, where human transformation evolves.

Reunion and Communion

JS: I remember after completing my sentence, do you remember?, I was taken to the United States Penitentiary in Atlanta. Many people in Puerto Rico had expected my arrival, but the FBOP had other plans. Upon finally arriving in Puerto Rico sometime later, I remember the activities, the marches, and the manifestations in front of the Federal Prison in San Juan that you all carried out. I was preparing myself to be incarcerated. I remember asking a prison guard if I could have access to a window with which to see the activities outside. I also recall receiving a visit from a Catholic nun, Sister Joyce. I told her that I was feeling strange. I told her that it would not be easy and that maybe I was not well. She asked, "why

not?" I replied, "because I'm very concerned about the well-being of prisoners; because I care and hope that they'll be okay." "And for this you feel strange?," she asked. I cried. She said, "you're fine. Continue educating and projecting that profound sense of hope that you are because that is your project, that is your project."

NZ: The imprisonment. . . Confinement. . . Torture and mistreatment was converted into the reason for your discipline of tolerance, patience, hope, and forgiveness. To the extent of your feelings to levels of meanings that crossed with your conscience, that are not always compatible with reason, became a stronghold for you. To love another is a political decision. To love one that would have to hate them is a radically political decision. And so it wasn't rationality that got you through this. It wasn't reason. It wasn't the history of colonial politics. It was your profound sense of hope and possibility; the undefined, the unknown, the borderless, embraced in a way reserved for those that know, we really know the power of revolutionary love.

JS: Yes, I believe I came out stronger than I went in. But I also believe that my strength was not to be found where many might think. I was not angry. I was not out for revenge. My commitment to our national liberation grew. I learned to see the colonizer for what he is. I learned to understand that the United States colonial system in Puerto Rico is a reflection of how deeply colonized the American state is itself. Because when your identity relies upon the oppression, of the denigration, and the exploitation of another, whether it be an individual or an entire nation, the evidence of your own social, moral, and political poverty is made more than obvious. And so, as I mentioned above, the colonized also needs to be freed. But sadly, the colonizer cannot do this for himself because at an ontological level, and an axiological level, he defines the world on the basis of power over and not life shared. And finally, I realized, and was reaffirmed in my deep belief that ultimately we are responsible for our liberation; and that we are our greatest challenge for transformation, and at times, our greatest obstacle.

Pedagogy in (E)Motion Inside the Lion's Mouth

JS: During the classes I taught in the prison I remember looking into the faces of men in their seventies, young men 19 and 20 years of age all working to get their GED. Some study because they genuinely wanted to learn. Others, because by doing so they might receive a star on their prison record. Whatever the reason, I was not about to let the opportunity pass. I know that no one is born bad nor good, we become, and we are always in a state of becoming. And so I ask them, "what did you dream of when you were a child? What should want to do? What did you want to be?" The result was overwhelming. The dialogues that followed proved for some too difficult, for others necessary; but for all a moment of profound rehumanization in a place that would have them believe they were less than human.

NZ: You open their windows to their emotions. I remember you choose to share with us that the prison was an experience whereby future is not projected and the prisoner must assign himself the task of forging dreams.

JS: I am convinced that prison is not about rehabilitation. As I mentioned earlier, why would anyone consider rehabilitating himself or herself for a healthy life in such a sick society? And so the challenge is more about transformation, one's own transformation in communion with the struggles to transform society. This is not a matter of antagonisms. This is truly a matter of life or death for the future of our social health. And so, I would share with the prisoners the following thought: the day you cease to dream, you cease to be a subject and you relegate yourself to the lines of the objectified, an existence of thingness. The wonder of a dream is not to live it in reality, but to realize that the dream itself is real and can in fact, nourish human potential.

Educating the Oppressor

JS: We have done much to destroy the very act of thought in children. The saturation of their lives by the incessant consumption of the mass media industry. The lack of creative play, time dedicated to reading, and interactive human activity is leaving more and more children to live what Freire referred to as a *culture of silence*. But this is not just the case for children. I have had students tell me that many of the professors that subscribe to critical thinking and Freirean philosophies of education contradict themselves when not allowing their students to question them and their particular positions as educators. This contradiction exists because we have been educated in a society to not question. But beyond this, we have designed a system of critical thinking that allows questions to be raised as long as the questions somehow fit with being the parameters, within the boundaries of a legitimacy, of a framework that our intellectual tyranny has cleverly managed to construct. Interestingly, we can then claim to be critical educators, radical pedagogues, progressive thinkers, all the while witnessing progressive social decay, growing cynicism, and political corruption. Such a profound contradiction begs the question.

NZ: Part of psychological colonialism that also projects to the pedagogy of the oppressed in the sense that having internalized the power of the authority as something unchallenging then our affect and our capacity to assert and initiate ideas or debates is diminished.

NZ: I am convinced that there are many ambulatory prisons around there, we call them schools or classrooms, reminding me of Dr. Picó's University Prison Project in Puerto Rico. These may include government agencies with their institutional violence, universities that do not accomplish their missions, are many others. The statistics are clear, 100% of youth between 13 and 19 years of age, male and female, that are today a part of the state's correction system or school dropouts, were mistreated and neglected. Their homes and schools have abandoned their reasons for being.

JS: Paulo Freire police told us that education was a dare. Education is fundamentally a subversive act. Why? Because that which we accept as a given will, or should be challenged and transformed tomorrow. And so what is to be subverted. There are no comfort zones in education. It is a dare, challenging the student, challenging the teacher, challenging the didactic materials at hand. Yes, in some instances we have mastered the technology of education, the techniques; but, we have failed painfully to educate where education is more than just the reinvention of technique with little or no attention to human transformation. In Puerto Rico, our education, much like our social-political endeavors, has become anesthetized by what Juan Antonio Corretjer, our national poet, referred to as "the poison of reformism."

Education vs Terror: Decriminalizing Knowledge

In Puerto Rico we have excellent educators, those that we call "the indispensable" because they educate and educate themselves also because, as Hostos reminded us, they do not waste their time of action in words. These educators are forged from their pain and commitment. The following lines were composed by lawyer Villanueva (2009), former president of the Puerto Rico Bar Association and lawyer for Puerto Rican political prisoner Oscar López Rivera:

Oscar López has been imprisoned for some 28 years¹⁰ (he is 66 years of age). It takes much intellectual and emotional discipline to prepare for a visit. At times they cancel the visits, then authorize them, without explanation. The object is always to provoke and have motives to stall or cancel the visit. My instinct is to protest the injustice, but I stay quiet so that if it is authorized I can visit us in peace and not give these folks a satisfaction of canceling it. Oscar resisted 12 ½ years in the Marion USP, a prison that substituted Alcatraz

and which Amnesty International considers one of the most inhumane for its violations of human rights. Resistance and struggle characterize Oscar's personal discipline. He reminds us that each new day of life is a gift. *If to survive with integrity and faithful to my principles, I must eat rock, then rock is what I will eat.* He has a great sense of humor and incredible memory and so the themes of our conversations never wear out. It hurts profoundly to leave the prison and to leave that serene smile of a Puerto Rican whose suffering simply underscores the right of his country to be free (p. 22).

That educated uses his pedagogy to elevate the human spirit. . . And that believes in the freedom of this country is called a terrorist. This was the same title the Brazilian government assigned to Paulo Freire, and the same title the South African government assigned to Nelson Mandela. It is in this context that we understand the arrest, the trial, and the imprisonment of Professor José Solís Jordán. The purpose was, according to an FBI agent under oath, to create an environment within which the professor would find no alternatives to ponder. Dr. Solís reminded the FBI that there were no alternatives to ponder. As a subject of the colonial regime struggle is the only dignified position. The point of the FBI was to do more damage to more people. José said, "the bus stops here. You do what you believe you must do and we will do likewise." To decolonize we must feel and think freedom, no rationalizations are needed. . . what justification does freedom need?

Epilogue

The formula is simple: It is sufficient that each time we feel more as brothers, well enough to share their common victory, oh well enough to cry in common disgrace.

Nemesio R. Canales, Puerto Rican journalist, novelist, play writer, and politician who defended women's civil rights

From the pedagogy of the emotion we recognize the connection between the knower and the known. It is also the street pedagogy in the widest context that allows for the continuity of actions that lead to the reinvention and the rewriting of history. The professor is a person that not only provides information and the space for it to be thought and rethought, but also to promote human development, understanding this as an indicator of human advancement for sustainable life. We incorporate into the educational scenario, like the courtroom, like the streets, our denunciations and education. We challenge as we announce possibility. With this idea I imagined this graphic that looks like a flower or could be a strong tree: *solid* which glows solidaritarian strength, on streets, on communities, even more in the halls of the academia. What I envisioned was a human ecology of solidarity as an axis for humanization.

The questioning of the use and maintenance of cultural tools leads us to an analysis of how and why and when our identities are forged. In this encounter, where the disciplines converge to think of life, to think of the human, and to think of education, the urgency of a pedagogy of solidarity is born: educate ourselves to understand injustice, to denounce it, and to intentionally take actions in the name of possibility,

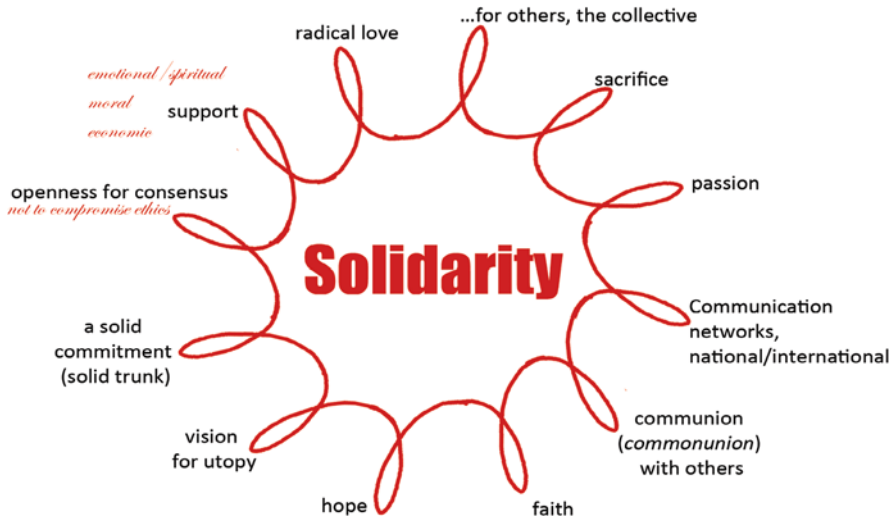


Fig. 9.1 Human ecology of solidarity (Zambrana (2000) revised (2010))

of a proposal to reinvent, and of a commitment to educate for human transformation because there is no other education.

Notes

1. The original expression is “narrative quality” and it is mentioned in Schipani, D. (2002 p. 35), but it is from Stephen Crites, in the article titled The narrative quality of experience, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* (Sept. 1971), 291–311
2. In this point I want to name the human profile of the UPRASO Group and important collaborators and friends that made possible the big web of solidarity and “radical love,” other than the ones that are mentioned in the text by their reflections or by reference (I apologize for any unvoluntary omission.): Nívea Torres, Andrés Collazo, Lucy Torres and her Group EVASPI, Víctor García-San Inocencio, Antonio Martínez, Waldemiro Vélez, Carlos Rodríguez-Fraticelli, Gloria Cuevas, Edna Pacheco, Aida Concepción, Iraida Albino, Luis Nieves-Falcón, Salvador Rosa, Jorge Sánchez, Dr. Hillyer, Anaida Pascual, Luis Rivera-Pagán, Víctor Hernández, Tito Aponte, José H. Oliveras, Peri Coss, Jacinto Ordóñez (Costa Rica) Antony De Jesús, (US) José Salcedo (US), Vanessa Pascual, Donaldo Macedo (US), Joe Kincheloe (US), Shirley Steinberg (US), Celeste Freytes, Roamé Torres, Gisela Rosado, Ivette Torres, Gladys Escalona, Nilda García, Cosuelo Castro, Sylvia Rivera-Viera, Aurea Echevarría, Ada Verdejo, Eduardo Suárez, Dennis París, Antonio Martínez, Diana Rivera-Viera, Kevin Rivera, Víctor Muñoz-Fraticelli, Maruca García, Ricardo Ramos, Ruth Carrión, José O. Padilla, Nancy López, Roberto Ramos, Efraín González-Tejera, José L. Méndez, Yesenia Beltrán, María Carrión, Carmen Turull, Julio Collazo, José Santiago, Efraín Santiago, Guillermo Mena, Fernando Picó, Raúl Escudero, Rossi Fernández, Ana H. Quintero, Ileana Quintero, Angel Quintero, Eneida Vázquez, Julio Muriente, Julio Rodríguez, Carmelo Ruíz, Juanita Colombani, Jaime Negrón, Ethel Ríos-Orlandi, and many other colleagues of APPU and a strong supporter and attorney-in-law Linda Backiel.

3. Part of this piece was a biography written by the author on occasion of the Puerto Rican Association of University Professors (APPU) Assembly in 1999. The APPU dedicated the assembly to Solís: *In reconocimiento por representar para la APPU el educador comprometido en conseguir la excelencia académica y, a su vez, en defender que se haga justicia con la Universidad, sus estudiantes y docentes. José, eres ejemplo para todos nosotros cuando, aun encarcelado, continuas tu labor intelectual. Impartes con tu vida misma una cátedra de dignidad.*
4. Puerto Rico was acquired by the United States from Spain as a result of the Spanish-American War of 1898. The United States governed by a civilian “pseudo government” established fundamentally through two laws passed by U.S. Congress in 1900 and 1917, known as the Foraker Act and the Jones Act, respectively. These two laws were organic acts, that is, statutes that provide for the basic structure of a territorial government. In 1917, Congress extended U.S. citizenship to Puerto Ricans, and in 1947 it authorized residents of Puerto Rico to elect their own governor. In this status Puerto Rico remained a colony of the United States, which was a source of international embarrassment to the United States. Public Law 600 was seen as an attempt to respond and uncover the colonial status. Its adoption was supported by the Popular Democratic Party, then in control of the government in Puerto Rico, and by its leader, Governor Luis Muñoz Marín. Professor Efrén Rivera-Ramos’s book, quoted in References, offered an excellent and extremely well-documented analysis of the legal and social context of the American colonialism that keeps Puerto Rico a territory with illusory political and economic powers.
5. Academic Senate of UPR, Río Piedras (1997). [Certification of the Academic Senate] Certificación del Senado Académico 61: Acuerdo para solidarizarse con el contenido de la Resolución de la Facultad de Educación en respaldo al Dr. José Solís Jordán. 20 de noviembre de 1997. <http://senado.uprrp.edu/Indices/Indice-1997-98-final.pdf>
6. Teófilo Torres is a professor of Drama at the UPR and a distinguished actor of movies and other local productions, invited to donate his art by Dr. Lucy Torres, founder of EVASPI, a group of volunteers from our solidararian group of professors. Roy Brown is an interpreter and composer of nova trova genre as well as ballads: author of 20 productions, his music has a very political and social critique profile. Andrés Jiménez is a “trovador,” also an interpreter and composer of native music, also author of more than 10 music albums. The group Tuna Gallardos is a university group of male university students. Dayivet Alemán and Daniel Rivera, Jr. are two talented young singers who donated their music and talent.
7. Pupil’s Works: El proyecto colonial en la escuela pública 1898–1903 (The colonial project in the public school) by Prof. Ramón López, Cocobalé Editions (1998). It contains original worksheets of the first schools in Puerto Rico, where classes were taught in English using an American curriculum. López taught at the UPR courses in anthropology at the Social Sciences Faculty. He is an artisan of textiles, writer, and researcher.
8. This interview was conducted on January 2009 in the office 409 of the College of Education. I am gratefully in debt with Ms. Vivian Villar, my undergrad assistant and to Ms. Ileana Caraballo, graduate research assistant, for the effort they put into this transcription.
9. Book published in 1982, New Jersey: Slack Inc; this is a story of life for all ages and a lovely allegory of the developmental process.
10. Oscar López was one of the founders of the Rafael Cancel Miranda High School, now known as the Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos High School and the Juan Antonio Corretjer Puerto Rican Cultural Center in Chicago. He declined the presidential amnesty, but never critiqued the decision taken for other 12 prisoners. López is presently in prison Terre Haute, Indiana, and his release date is July 27, 2027.

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Chapter 10

E-motioned Teachers Who Dare to Teach!

The beloved and deeply felt teachers never die, because their stories live on, their hearts keep beating.

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One of the most inspiring books I have ever read is Paulo Freire's *Teachers as cultural workers: Letters to those who dare teach*. That is why, for the title of this chapter, I used an expression that suggests courage and devotion toward teaching. In Freire's book (1998), there is a wealth of reflections and warnings written with the typical Freirian expression rooted in tenderness and in what I call *critical hope*. Therefore, when I first thought of collecting a series of essays about great teachers, I also was thinking of introducing myself in a more critical dimension of my own work as a critical teacher and a critical psychologist, by listening firsthand to the stories of teachers who have had the courage to teach with purpose. This also was an opportunity to give back, to enjoy and reflect, as well, a project to spread the knowledge of historic jewels. I tried to capture specific anecdotes and storytelling of critical events, the intimate personal voices of teachers who influenced the Puerto Rican educational system during the 1960s until the present. Carmen Turull, Professor Emeritus of the Faculty of Education, and Laura Leticia Herrans, retired professor and researcher of the Faculty of Social Sciences, were, in their life events, an important history book to use as reference. These interviews are full of pedagogy in (e)motion, where movement and passion meet. As I tell about their work and memories, I recognize in myself the aspiration to engage in pedagogy with a spine as that of the Puerto Rican women *Carmen Turull and Laura Leticia Herrans*, yet I also notice that there is a sense of work in progress that is not finished. Both educators, in their own fields, one in education and curriculum and the other in psychology, have left a footprint in my country and in several generations of professionals and citizens.

Teachers in (E)Motion: Histories Thought–Felt by the Educators

Affection is the human translation of interest, warmth, and closeness and is experienced as a pleasant physical sensation, on occasions strong and overwhelming which is at the same time pleasurable. Given the conviction that emotion is the sister of reason and it is through emotion that our thoughts extend and expand beyond the frontiers of the specific, it is because pedagogy in (e)motion has no end: it is an unfinished project. One of my objectives was to show that the life experiences of exemplary educators have a very strong common thread of emotions that move, nurture, and diversify their academic, personal, and collective work. One of the central theses of the neuroscientist Antonio Damasio (1994, p. xii) is

... reason may not be as pure as most of us think it is or wish it were ... Emotions and feelings may not be intruders in the bastion of reason at all: They may be enmeshed in its networks, for worse and for better. The strategies of human reason probably did not develop, in either evolution or any single individual, without the guiding force of the mechanisms of biological regulation, of which emotion and feeling are notable expressions. Moreover, even after reasoning strategies become established in the formative years, their effective deployment probably depends, to a considerable extent, on the continued ability to experience feelings.

Certainly, pedagogy that is critically inscribed and sensitive is one with meaning and feeling through conviction and enthusiasm. Felt meaning (Caine & Caine, 1997) is almost a “visceral sensation of relationship, an unarticulated sense of connectedness that ultimately culminates in insight.” An insight, an “aha!” experience is a Gestalt conception of something that is revealed mentally in a mysterious way, which can mix moments, sensory memories and emotions. As discussed in [Chapter 1](#), genuine understanding links thought and feeling, mind and body, and makes us into *feeling–thinking beings*. The expressions of the emotions and feelings in our human nature arise from our biohistoric nature which allows evolution and the development of reason.

It is precisely through the dialogic experience with Leticia and Carmen that I have attempted to capture their personal histories which reveal to us the power of emotion in the development of novel and unconventional pedagogical practices. I also wished to inquire with them about their life experiences, guided by their biographies, in relation to their development as professionals, their ethical precepts, beliefs, and pedagogical practices, their most memorable mishaps and bumps, and about how they became university educators. Preserving their experiences and allowing us to understand their transcendency help to comprehend the educational problems of today, even when we look toward the past. Here lies the value of its unfinished dimension.

Narratives: *Mundillo* Threads in History

Mundillo is a delicate lace, very complicated, and beautiful; it requires much ability, patience, time, and concentration. In each anecdote there is a piece of the history of education that defines us and at the same time gives us wings. In each narration there are fine and delicate threads that interweave and connect with other histories. The narratives are possibility and development. Threading histories is like creating a big work of *mundillo*. This is not at all easy when the world is spinning ever faster around electronic and digital technologies that are foreign to our embodied personas. A great part of our history of education is lost because we do not take on the task of writing and documenting it with promptness while we are living it. We think that it is a matter for professional historians who, by the way, are scarce. Narrative enables historic documentation of the teachings of teachers and psychologists from the perspectives of those who forged it; interpretations are exposed which connect the speaker with the interviewer that reveal the hermeneutic quality of human phenomenology and as Ruth Behar (1996) calls becoming “vulnerable observers.” At the same time, a world of interpretative possibilities is revealed by uncovering the relief of personal stories and emerging discourses of educational literature through the testimonials, autobiographies, anecdotal diaries, and life histories, among others.

By choosing to listen and document the spoken word, not its analysis, but rather rescuing it and sharing it, its stories, tales, and stations of the cross, I chose to connect with them, expose myself to the vulnerability of observing inward and not from the outside, the women that represent a unique point in time. The history of

education goes beyond the history of curriculum and its institutions—it is made up by the words and memories that are alive in each of the teachers. The narrative of the personal history transforms them in speakers-subjects of their own histories. The speakers may send messages and communicate meanings that allow us to interpret historical events, obtain teachings, and reflect about diverse aspects of life. In [Chapter 5](#) of *Pedagogy in (e)motion*, I made an exposition of the wealth and diversity that the narratives allow in the university context, particularly of students that are preparing to become teachers.

Pascual-Morán (2004) makes a defense of what she calls “*the crash of narrative*,” indicating the flourishing of tendencies in ethnographic educational research that recognizes the validity of narrative as a way of knowing and a way of organizing and communicating educational experiences. Tales about the history of ideas and the conceptions of science, the arts, and culture are always counted, conceived, and written by those who document what others have done, but in the tradition of narration, the protagonists themselves are the vocalists. And it is because educators—above all the women educators—are, deep down, storytellers. We are artists who organize our thoughts and attempt to communicate the curricular content through tales full of imagination and creative energy. We are speakers and creators that have begun to recognize the enormous open and legitimate possibilities to recreate our personal and professional stories, to reconstruct our own pedagogical experience—that history that we write in and from education. Let us remember that few teachers attribute much importance to their “pedagogical wonders” since these are absolutely intrinsic to their daily lives and it is their ethical responsibility, and therefore it is necessary to value their possibilities, remember them, share them, and document them.

Although the oral testimonies have been used since long ago to learn about the past, in educational research orality has been relegated to privilege research based on a scientific quantitative model (Alvarez-Swihart & Bravo-Vick, 2005). The history of education, in Puerto Rico and in many other countries, has been written from diverse perspectives, but very few times is the voice heard in the anecdotes and experiences of the teachers who were the protagonists of the process. The historical reconstruction of education, based mainly on written documentation, should fuse the presence of those who not only researched the history, but also those who worked—the “cultural workers”—a full pedagogical agenda. Teaching, as Hooks (1996) points out, is a performative act, and we must use the space for change, invention, improvisation, and thoughtful planning.

The Making of This Essay: The Interviewer and Her Cause

This piece of work could be inscribed in a descriptive study of a qualitative nature that uses a narrative design that is inscribed in emotionalism (Silverman, 2006) powered by an intention of eliciting memories and remembrances, not for an objectivated analysis. As was pointed out previously, the basic method used was the oral history based on open questions that sparked the person to remember and reflect about experiences, focusing on three key life stages: their experiences as students, their studies in preparing to become a teacher, and their work as

teachers. I approached both educators as an alumnus and on many occasions as an attentive psychologist who listens and is moved, who allows “transference y countertransference” that involves me and makes me an accomplice.

I remember that as part of my undergraduate preparation, I prepared a life history during a newly created seminar focused on cultural ethnography. Professor Antonio Díaz-Royo marked my life in many unsuspected ways—it was irritating and provoking at times, and at other it was of tremendous inspiration for me. Founder of the Word Archive at the University of Puerto Rico, it was Dr. Díaz-Royo who helped me to develop a liking for live history and for life made into history. In the seminar titled *Life Histories*, we talked about our history as a people to understand human beings from their experiences and stories. I chose to interview an 80-year-old peasant woman, Doña Francisca, from my hometown, who became an oral encyclopedia for me, at my 20 years of age (1994). It was one of the hardest and most gratifying experiences that I had in my university psychology courses.

Another historiographic experience that marked me as a university professor was the interviews with retired professors Sylvia Viera and Juanita Carrillo, two of the four founders of the Puertorican Association of University Professors (APPU) in the 1960s. These women, together with brothers Arturo Meléndez and Ramón Meléndez, marked a footprint in the fight for syndicalization and organized participation of the professors in the university. APPU is the largest and most powerful organization of university professors in Puerto Rico and in 2004 paid a very meritorious homage to the four founders while they were alive, and I had the honor of documenting and writing the profiles for both women educators, while Dr. Carlos Rodríguez Fraticelli interviewed the Meléndez brothers. In these two ethnographic experiences, I took pictures of the professors and I gathered others that I asked of them, I used documents such as curriculum vitae, journals and newspaper articles, videos and memorabilia. I visited them several times, had coffee with Professor Carrillo, and even took a video with my digital camera which we later shared with an audience of 150 professors. I spoke several hours by telephone with Professor Viera, who was in Miami, Florida, and I collected several photographs that were given to me by her daughter Dr. Diana Rivera-Viera. Of the four visionaries, two are gone—Carrillo died in 2009 and Arturo Meléndez died in 2008.

My questions and epistemologic curiosity as researcher were inscribed in the dialogue with the interviewees, who narrated pieces of their lives guided by my curiosity. My curiosity, in turn, was inscribed in the theoretical presumption that I was going to find interesting histories hidden in the intimacy of these women, nurtured by reading the book, *Teaching by Heart: The Foxfire Interviews*, of Sara Day Hatton (2005), which awoke innumerable ideas, emotions, and future projects in me. Another inspiring work was *Memories that educate: Juana A. Méndez and José Ferrer Canales: Weaving histories of our schools* (Pascual-Morán, 2004) by Puerto Rican authors and colleagues from the university. Both books allowed me to weave the *mundillo* of themes that emerged from the narratives through the interviews. These were the conversion and conviction of being an educator, connecting experience with practice, the essential nature of mistakes, teachers as activists and intercessors, educators as mentors, philosophical guides and transformers, and the university as a space for research and humanization.

Organization and “Anti-format”

I did not follow the same format for documenting interviews. The anti-format allowed me to establish a triangulating connection between myself and my history tied to the life experiences of the interviewees, their lives and narratives, and their reference documents. This is what I would call ethnomethodology, which is not a method, but a model to describe how we create culture (Silverman, 2006). My interest was not to analyze, but to get close to their histories to understand them and disseminate them. These are the reasons to describe the process as a very particular one. In addition, I used Galeano’s reference to the verb “remembering,” in his masterpiece, *El libro de los abrazos* (2000, electronic version), which from Latin roots (*re-cordis*) means “to revisit the heart.”

First, I carried out two interviews with each of the educators, in different moments between 2006 and 2009. Second, both women are very active in their respective fields even though they are fighting degenerative health conditions—Parkinson’s and Alzheimer’s. Because of this, the interviews were carried out in different contexts and places. The health conditions have not stopped Letty Herrans, who is the president of a corporation that offers psychological services and training in special education, human development and education, and infant and child care. Carmen Turull offers two courses titled *The teaching of modern grammar and language* and *Language Arts in content areas at the secondary level* for university students who are future teachers and collaborates by editing written work from her colleagues and graduate students. Third, my personal and professional relation with each of them happens in different ways. I was a postgraduate student of Letty Herrans since my 20 years in graduate courses in clinical psychology and evaluation, and presently I collaborate with her in some service and research projects. On the other hand, I met Carmen Turull as a colleague and senior professor 7 years later, when I started as professor in the Faculty of Education on a part-time contract. I was returning from Philadelphia after completing my doctoral courses and internship and was undertaking my research with preschool children and their parents in Puerto Rico to complete my doctoral dissertation in the spring of 1992.

Letty Herrans: Her Trajectory as Beacon

I carried out the first interview with Dr. Herrans on March of 2006 when I wrote her biography, which I read at the Eighth Conference of School Psychology sponsored by the Association of School Psychologists of Puerto Rico. For this documentary project I used the interview with questions focused on her trajectory as university student, graduate and practicing psychologist, professor, researcher, and administrator. To be able to situate myself in time as I made the questions, I used her extensive curriculum vitae, which I studied carefully to elaborate the questions. I took photos in her home, we had lunch together, we discussed her books—which I use in my practice—and I asked her for photos of other historic moments which she, and her

partner Dr. Jeanny Rodríguez, very graciously provided to me. I was Letty's student, so I knew part of her trajectory; I lived it with her and my classmates. The interview lasted 4 h; it was conducted at her home; I did not use a voice recorder—just my good episodic memory, her CV, and Jeanny's help. Dr. Rodríguez, professor of psychology, helped us remembering events and important dates, pointing to documents and research and contributing good humor to our encounter. I was a student of Dr. Herrans from 1984 to 1986, and 4 years later I was her colleague, when she was already retiring. I could insert myself in their stories as I knew the context of academic work in the university. In addition to these resources, I also used the anecdotes of alumni, family members, and friends from different historical periods—which were not so hard to get a hold of, since I could locate them by telephone and could receive their stories and contributions through electronic mail.

The second interview was also in her home which has a spectacular view of the ocean on the northern coast of San Juan. The waves that constantly can be seen from her windows and are whirling at 10 a.m. in the middle of July 2009 were a constant metaphorical reference of what was and still is the life of Letty Herrans: a constant and exciting desire to do and undertake. In July I carried out what could be called the turnaround of the interview since I was getting ready to interview Letty in the context of what was the meaning of her work as practicing psychologist, and educator in psychology. From this second interview, which I did record so I wouldn't forget, emerged the psychological and spiritual intimacies of the educator, the mentor, the advocate, and activist for the development of a Puerto Rican Psychology. I decided to write a live text using her narrative of historical events and moments inscribed in the chronological sequence of the biography that I had done in 2006. That way, I inserted their histories, anecdotes, and reflections in a narration in which she presents two voices: her own narrated by me in 2006 and her active voice in 2009.

Doña¹ Carmen Turull: A Voice Made Verb

With Professor Emeritus Carmen Turull, the way in which I used the interview as a resource was very different. I did the first interview in May 2008, toward the end of my sabbatical to write the book *Pedagogy in (e)motion: Rethinking spaces and relations*. Carmen's health was better in 2008 which allowed me to capture on tape and my notes the spark and stamina that has always characterized her. The context in which I saw and spoke with her, every Tuesday and Thursday, is the same university, the Faculty of Education, where she offers her courses *The teaching of modern grammar and language* and *Language Arts in content areas at the secondary level*. Therefore, the interview of 2008 was loaded with memories and experiences that gallop from the 1960s to the present. I used a voice recorder to gather her stories and answers to my few questions or requests. She took charge of converting her voice into verb and transforming the memories into pedagogical precepts and postures, and it was her own will steering the interview. I read and revised the transcription and passed it over to Professor Turull for her revision, as we had agreed. She said

enthusiastically, “Give me the transcription to elaborate on some aspects that time did not allow for during the interview.”²

In the fall of 2008, we kept on meeting to follow up, even though her condition of Parkinson’s disease was deteriorating. Doña Carmen, as I call her with much respect, continues to be in continuous contact with students, and revises texts, articles, and theses from colleagues and graduate students. In August, when we returned from summer vacations, I handed her the transcribed interview for her to revise, so that we could meet again to dialogue in more depth, as she wanted. Her health limited her visits to the university. Her tone of voice is very soft because of her condition, which is why she uses a voice amplifier, since she loves to talk to all students in the form of a magisterial conference, her movements are not as agile, and many times she slides around in her wheelchair. So I patiently awaited for our encounter. I remember she would tell me in the hallways, “I want us to sit down, I already read everything, I can meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays” with her unique desire to support and show solidarity toward her colleague’s projects.

So the moment arrived. Our encounter to reestablish the dialogue happened in December of 2009. She herself emphatically pointed out to me with great expression in her eyes, the story routes, I only took advantage of the magical moment. I had the privilege of being present at the formal farewell activity that was celebrated for her, and gathered a wealth of information on her biography while she was alive. Years later, in 2003, her investiture as Professor Emeritus in front of the Academic Senate was a wonderful event for her colleagues and alumni. As reference for the reader, I include information from existing profiles, which I separate from the interview. I decided to organize and present our dialogue, inscribed in the memories—to pass through the heart again (Galeano, 2000) of the experiences and anecdotes of my interviewee which are documented through suggestive subtitles. The following piece is a biography that I constructed from separate pieces of history I found in the university files.³



Carmen Turull

*Turull began her career in the public education system in Bayamón, PR, during the mid-twentieth century. In 1962, she was selected because of her performance to teach language and literature courses in the University of Puerto Rico. In the University High School, she started to cultivate in her students a passion for the literary vocation, the development of journalistic skills, and the authentic expression of the Puerto Rican ethos. In the decade of 1970, she joined the Department of Curriculum and Teaching of the Faculty of Education where she has worked during the past thirty seven years. She still delights us with her teaching of literature, grammar, and secondary Spanish curriculum with the same passion, but in a context where she is teacher of teacher candidates. She was recognized for Academic Excellence and Productivity by the University of Puerto Rico, representing for her peers her excellent mastery in her specialty and evidence of extraordinary talent. She created courses in the Department of Curriculum and Teaching and collaborated with other departments and faculties in the Campus to teach courses and seminars (Department of Spanish Studies, Faculty of Humanities, the Institute for Labor Relations, the Faculty of Social Sciences, and the School of Law of the University of Puerto Rico). Turull has always continued collaborating and advising in theses, editing books and research in different disciplines. She was coauthor of the book *Inclusion: privilege or right* with Dr. Luz Torres in 1996 which presents rich vignettes of people “with disabilities,” incorporating the text of national and federal laws. Turull acquires transcendence for her public presentations. The conference, in its classical dimension—an instrument to disseminate knowledge—has been the genre best cultivated by Professor Turull, in which she has won national prestige. After her retirement, she continued to offer courses, conferences, and workshops for the Organization of American States (OAS) in Costa Rica, El Salvador, México and Perú; and New York University, among others.*

To Teach Is to Share; to Share Is to Vibrate!

- NZ: Doña Carmen, I will not make many questions because I want to rescue essential elements from our conversation about your richest experiences and knowledge, since you are such a wonderful narrator and you have a wealth of knowledge generated over the years. We had begun a dialogue on fascinating things you told me, such as *education is a place to find oneself. If one does not find oneself, it is like not having a north*. Like seeing a bridge, feeling someone else’s pain. The bridge opens and strengthens both the other person and oneself as well. We also spoke about the pedagogy of experience. The need to go beyond theory. I believe that everything you have told me has to do with the pedagogy of experience. You also spoke about how you suggest to teachers to educate their vision, the way they look at things. Would you elaborate on this?
- CT: To educate is like seeing a bridge . . . sympathy is like a step, a bridge is the transubstantiation of which Aristotle spoke. In that dialogue with the other you change the other. A real teacher changes, transforms. It’s a change of text and context. For me, the teacher has to be competent and have wisdom.

You have to respect in order to transform. A pedagogy curriculum should “unpedagogize” . . . and transform into a humanist curriculum. Because it is not the content or the technique, it is the submission, the passion, which surpasses the technique. Good teachers give back security to those that have lost it, and present it to who has never had it. It is an offering . . . it is sacred. My foundations are based on the heroes of my brain: my sixth-grade teacher who gave me my life back. I was an orphan, brought up by my aunt, who was a saint . . . but a political uncle told me that I was ugly, poor, and despicable. He belonged to another social class, had a quarter million dollars during the decade of the 1930s, a real fortune. I’ll tell you about this in more detail later on. I like to feel that you are vibrating. It is like a fire. I don’t have words to describe it. Since third grade, my life plan was to be a teacher. That is what I wanted to give the world. Each person makes what he/she can with what they have, and what I had in my hands was my commitment and my desire. The second thing I want to tell you is that I have had excellent teachers. That was a privilege and I have remained a student forever. In the *Celestina* it is said that you can not be a teacher if you have never been a student. Now, at my 76 years of age, I feel great admiration for my teachers. For me it is a mystical experience.

NZ: Do you feel the need to not separate the teacher from being a student?

CT: That’s right, I am always enrolled in the university. Yes, I am enrolled in a class on Calderón de la Barca and another one on mysticism. It is a wonderful experience because I really become a student, I go to learn. Many have been my students. It is a precious, precious experience.

Hope Came Dressed as a Woman and a Teacher

CT: I also want to tell you that my life was transformed by my sixth-grade teacher. I was a very shy child, very insecure with an inferiority complex. Because an uncle of mine told me “that I was the ugliest, blackest, and poorest girl he had ever seen, and that no one would love me.” So the teacher told me “but you have an extraordinary mastery of language.” Then she gave me a permanent assignment. Every day I had to summarize the Spanish class. Second, I had to explain to my classmates who didn’t understand. So she taught me techniques to simplify what was complex. Third, she asked me to justify the assignment that I had given. One day, my teacher arrived looking more radiant than ever, and said “Carmen Turull, we made it.” She had proposed to elevate me to the category of intellectual leader. “You have been awarded the third honor of your class (1944) . . .” and I read the message of the graduating class... it was inspired on the poem by José de Diego *In the breach*⁴ . . . which is an affirmation without limits. This poem has about 20 imperative verbs . . . such as “come alive, beat, surge, emerge, roar, charge,” etc. and it is a message and an invitation to live with quality and hope, in spite of any threat; it is a defiance and it gives strength. When the graduation was over, everyone told me “you are

lovely . . . well done”. . . and my uncle was then cancelled out. The flame of my teacher’s passion was lighted within me. That is why I believe in the profession of teaching.

NZ: Then she did it with the assignment that you handed in every day. She exposed you, I imagine that she documented it and showed it to the school principal and to you.

CT: What my teacher was doing is called authentic assessment. Then, not enough with that, now comes an anecdote. She told me “I select you as class valedictorian” and she was inspired with *The Breach* by Jose de Diego. That was my message in sixth grade when I graduated. She wrote it so that I would interpret it. Then she made me aware of the verbs: rise, reemerge, and throb. So it is an affirmative action of self-discovery. Like mantras. You can do it, you are . . . Not happy enough with that, she took me to the town’s movie theatre to rehearse the message. But, what happens then? She would take me to the movies once in a while and took me to the second floor. Here comes the second transformation. She would tell me “carry out a permanent performance.” When I would begin, she said, “wait a second, lift your face, suck in your belly and bring out your chest.” I always had a big belly and small chest. So she wanted me to be fully erect. Then she said “articulate and project yourself.” I did not know what she was telling me. But she was clear. So I became an actress, a protagonist. Therefore, Dr. Zambrana, it is important for me to transform my students. If I was transformed, a teacher can transform. For that, she needs to know her students and discover their talents. With time, I have become aware that what she did was not communicate, but transform. The Catholics, when they take the Holy Host, believe that it is transformed into the body and blood of Christ. That is called transubstantiation. For me, when there is communication with human beings, it is a transubstantiation.

If you have a shy student, you give him self-assurance, to an aggressive student, you give control, to an insecure student, you give security. A message that I have for my students is that “a true teacher gives back security to who lost it.” That is the second point. The third point is that I believe that what is taught must have meaning for life. How does this touch me? How does what I learned in the first-grade or graduate classroom transform me? How does it affect my life? How does it make me see the world in a different way? I had Plato’s cave very present. When I studied humanities I thought that who came out of the cave was me. I was in a state of awareness of happiness. . . I felt in an altered state of consciousness, it was like knowing another world.

Text, Word, and Life

NZ: We have spoken of a student you had that was suicidal, who wrote notes that apparently were not related to the class but that was his text. What do you remember about that experience?

- CT: That was his text. He established a comparison between what I taught and his life. He made his text in the course I was teaching . . . Language and literature . . . I cited Pablo Neruda “to live I have been born . . .,” “those of us who live enlightened to not tolerate to die in darkness: María Zambrano, Spaniard . . . the generation of 27” . . . he wrote in his notebook and articulated his text . . . and years later he confessed to me [about his suicidal attempt].
- NZ: The content, all the poetic figures of speech, he brought them to his text.
- CT: Language is the center of your being. Therefore, my language and his became merged. While it was happening I didn’t know it, but I didn’t know it theoretically, but I had an intuition. Those messages. As I say, the word is magical. When I give a good class I feel it. When the student is transformed, you feel it. One day I will bring you what the student wrote. A beautiful poem, beautiful. The other point that seems very important is that between the teacher and the student there has to be an honest relation. As I told you, in “La Celestina” the Spanish medieval tragic comedy, I had learned that no one can be a teacher if she has not been a student. So the teacher has to always be a student . . . it is a never-ending search. A permanent reading. There cannot be competition with the students. The other point is a sense of humor. Do not allow anyone to laugh at the students, but with them. I use the principles of literature and the Bible as a guide. When you enter the classroom take off your sandals, the land you step on is holy. That for me . . . is precious, a classroom that has a certain aroma of sanctity and mysticism. To take off your shoes is a metaphor of humility, of cleanliness, respect, purity. It is to divest yourself. In each literary reading I obtain an aphorism of wisdom. I try to get a motto for me and the students. For example, in the Quixote, “I know who I am and who I can be.” Because my experience is charged with nostalgia and shyness, of fears and rejections. That’s why before being an academic being, you have to be very integral, a humanist, and unfragmented, to be a whole piece. Another thing that gives me an advantage is that I perceive people as a nucleus of talent. It has given me great results . . . sometimes I get angry when I see that the student fails himself.
- NZ: What do you do in these cases . . . what is your recommendation?
- CT: Confronting them gives me results. “You look like a shadow” . . . that I see much light . . . and that you see it. Sometimes the results are not immediately evident, but with time, you see them. When they come to look for letters of recommendation, they have triumphed or they are in the process of requesting readmission to graduate studies, I see them there. I talk to them every time I can, about my teacher: Ana Ortega. Fifty years later when my son died she called me. I hadn’t seen her again. Then she told me “remember that when my only sweetheart and husband died I wanted to live. I want you to live. To live with meaning.” For me, literature has that strength. The other thing is that there are no super animated words. One has to understand that the word is situational. Therefore, how to work with the poor vocabulary of a student who is not aware of what he has. Then, they reach a level of learning and speak as you do. That is a beautiful experience. Also, you should not deny recognition with a sense of achievement

even if minimum. Vygotsky says that each Word is a microcosm of consciousness . . . Words are to be studied and analyzed, shredded, look for the root, of its reason for being and its process. The dogma of the canonical attitude must be refused. An iconoclastic attitude—a challenge to authority and the power—should be analyzed in depth and with professional seriousness, and above all respect for the human being that pronounces it.

Be a Student and Let Yourself Be Taught

NZ: Those experiences you have told me have been with university students, which were the most recent. But you were teaching much before. How many years of experience have you had? How old were you when you began to teach?

CT: I have around sixty years of experience. I have always been a teacher . . . from Kinder to post graduate. And if I were born again I would be a teacher. I started when I was around 20. In Kinder, preschool, but of course it was not as it is today. They were fewer, in Bayamón, in a little private school. Afterwards I was an elementary school teacher, then middle school, I am fascinated by the intermediate-grade students. It is a challenge for me. Because I believe that's where a crossing is. The situations that the psychologists call the era of conflict. Because it is there where so much hope is needed to follow the way. By the way, that is where there are more dropouts. And suicides also. My high school teacher Laura Gallego . . . [ex Dean of the College of Education on 1960s] recommended me to substitute her as professor here in the university, that was a precious experience. I began in the university in 1950 and I left during the second year, because of extreme poverty. But I anguished for the thirst for knowledge. The tower [University Tower monument] called me, the call of the tower, the icon of the university. I returned to Humanities. I finished with honors and was the happiest being on earth. And I have never abandoned my studies; I decided to be an eternal student. Laura Gallego recommended me to teach at the University High School in 1969 and I taught Spanish Literature. It was an unforgettable experience . . . The students were my fellow teachers, I learned from them.

Resilience, Affect, and Attachment

CT: You learn from the most difficult because they are a challenge. They pose more demanding intellectual levels. The experience with those who are rejected can be richer because it requires research and inquiry. They demand life, not books. As I was saying, I have had more success with the students nobody wants, with the aggressive ones, with the irresponsible ones, with the indifferent. Even with the delinquents. I have had extraordinary success. Because I was a difficult child. The teacher has to dress down in sanctity, not dress up, become more human. I have had very beautiful experiences. Really precious! I can give you

examples with names. I had two students in 12th grade who each came to my classroom with a D in previous Spanish courses, and C, D, F. With me they got an A. There was a faculty meeting and a teacher dared to ask me why I had given them an A. Well, one of them dedicated their high school graduation to me, dedicated two theses, from her masters and doctoral degrees. One of them is Dean of Student Affairs in Mirellbelly College, in upstate New York. The other one graduated with honors from Princeton University, and works in a university in San Juan. That is why care must be taken not to become prejudiced. Both have been successful. Why? Because I didn't care about the past, history begins again when they are with me.

NZ: Our history is made with them there . . . as you say.

CT: History begins when you are with me. I am not interested whether you got an A or F. That is your history. History has to be made each day because you are a subject of history. I promise you that I am going to help them to become better. Both have a doctorate. Malena is teaching comparative literature in the university. She is an extraordinary literary critic. Well, she dedicated her doctoral thesis to me because I was the first teacher who introduced her to literature. She dedicated her graduation to me, her master thesis and her doctoral thesis. I can give testimony of those histories of success. My theme is that if I am in front of a human being, whoever it may be, I recognize and have a feeling, or I commit myself to understanding that person is talented. I see that people are brilliant. Each one has a lot to teach and learn.

NZ: When you talk about having an intuition, is it that you notice something, or that you could see things, indications in the students that sparkle?

CT: They are indications. Expressions, looks . . . that's why I tell you it's necessary to educate the way you see. Many times. They are fleeting glances. Sometimes you perceive rejections. I learned a lot from a course on the development of personality and group counseling with Sebastian Cabrera and Dr. Patria Crespo. I affirm that there are teachers who make us "Ser": before the homeland and after the homeland. There are things that I believe should be done consciously such as feeling delight in teaching. For example, I am going through a disease, "Parkinson," I assure to you that I thoroughly studied the condition. Like never before, I created responsibility in fighting the disease. I had never been so prepared. Now I prepared even more. My project since third grade was to become a teacher. Something I learned is that "the soul's salvation by faith is the salvation of your body by which you seek fame." We are fame makers. You are responsible of your destiny. Plan your success and not your failure. I believe that every human being should ask themselves: how do I want to be remembered? In leaving a footprint.

NZ: One of the questions that I ask of students when they work on their portfolio is: how do I want to be remembered by my students? It's a question with no wrong or right answers. Everything that is said is how you want them to remember you.

CT: I ask that question. Aware that we are not perfect. But in the process I see that desire to aspire to the most perfect levels. And they are sincere with me when they feel I am sincere with them. That is your text, your content.

Integrity and Transformation

CT: The teacher should be as integral as possible. The teacher should be very sincere. Here are my virtues, here are my shortcomings. Self-discipline makes us vigilant of the teacher. The teacher should be an intellectually prepared being. Do you see how I take the emotional, the ethical, the essential? Well, the teacher has to be prepared, has to read, know about different fields. There has to be an interpretation. That security is projected to them. Never say what you know, let them discover what you know. You don't have to say it, they notice it. That comes down to having your own philosophy of life and of teaching.

NZ: This is very interesting because it makes me think in conference versus dialogues where they are who ask, maybe because it is another form of logic, because you can show them so they can do their own project.

CT: I discovered something from Thomas Barrett, Patricia Cross, D'Angelo is a teacher from Harvard who recommends the conference with pauses. And the other thing that reigns is justice above all. These are ethical principles that students value. So I would like you to dedicate a little time to shy students. You are not born shy, you become shy. When you are humiliated, for example . . . one becomes a facilitator, not someone who feels sorry. Get close and inject them with self-assurance, then they end up performing above their own expectations and our own. By far, these are indicators of a sense of accomplishment. To conclude, I want to point out that the teacher is not perfection, but a constant search and permanent reflection. There are times that can be considered passage rituals, transformation moments and the birth of consciousness and of liberation from prejudice. For me that is very important. That is why I believe



Laura Leticia (Letty) Herrans

in the heroic teacher, the teacher is a hero every day. That is what Freire meant with praxis.

Born in Vega Baja, Puerto Rico, in 1935,⁵ she obtained her baccalaureate degree in the University of Puerto Rico, Recinto Río Piedras Campus, in 1955. She completed her master's degree in educational psychology and higher education in the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., in 1957 and her doctorate in Educational and General Psychology in the same university in 1969. In spite of the constant vigilance of the director of the first Women's Residence in the UPR, Letty fully enjoyed the cultural life that the university offered in the decade of the 1950s: theatre, concerts, meetings, the verve, and the commotion of a very militant campus full of world-renowned intellectuals. But her first employment as a psychologist was in the state system of Mental Health in Puerto Rico.

The Best of Private Practice: New Horizons

LH: [Private practice] was the means to get out of Mental Health !!!!! We were very upset with Dr. Juan Rossello . . . one day he established a system to evidence our working hours (punch a card) . . . we opposed the measure . When you punch a card, then I will, from one professional to another. Then all three of us quitted and they found themselves without psychologists. We were unemployed . . . but our families stood behind us. And we didn't consult anyone, it was a matter of dignity. Don Juan could not believe it. I was unemployed, but Dad supported me. Dad always stood behind me. The director of psychology Juan Nicolas in the UPR called me to substitute a professor by contract, and afterwards I was given a full program. Virginia Sacarello, my friend and I, put up an office we rented and we began to provide services, we would evaluate, there weren't many cases, but we were known by reference from psychiatrists who sent us cases. I was intermittently teaching in the UPR, and that made me reduce my hours in the private practice.

NZ: *What can you tell me about the work in your private practice?*

LH: I loved to evaluate and see the potential in all the children, to see that life experience was an indicator of potential . . . I cannot forget the moment when a young boy, who turned out to be retarded according to the tests, I didn't know how to tell the mother . . . and she told me "doctor, don't worry, . . . he is big and no one messes with us. . . She was happy to have him as a son, she protected him, and loved him as her only son. "Don't worry . . . I know he is different . . ." She surprised me. I thanked God.. I can see him now. I, with my middle-class attitudes, a professional. She knew that he would never leave her . . . Her husband had died . . . That made me feel humble . . . to reevaluate myself, single and without responsibilities and so worried about his degree of retardation, and she was grateful of having him as a son, just as he was. The girls did not approach him for a date because they realized that he was

retarded . . . My reflection about that . . . was intense . . . His functionality was admirable, he was well educated, he had good manners, was respectful and very handsome. His mother knew more about how to manage him effectively than I did. I think one has to remain humble to life's teachings.

NZ: *Letty, you have always been very honest in your discourse. Tell me some of the lessons you have learned or moments when difficult decisions had to be made.*

LH: Children are a challenge . . . but they give us warnings . . . wake-up calls. When a child showed me that you have to enjoy ethically the evaluation and therapy process, it was precisely when I needed to retire and do other things. I found myself in a limit situation . . . up to the point of not being able to manage the rage of a challenging boy . . . that's when I realized I no longer enjoyed it, but instead of becoming frustrated, I changed the task. You really have to love and enjoy what you are doing, otherwise it is self-deluding.

From Psychologist to Educator! I Was Frightened!

Dr. Herrans, Letty first became an instructor during the summer the year that she completed her master's. Afterwards, she became a Professor of Psychology in the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus, a campus that benefited from her many research projects and her active, responsible, and continuous teaching.

NZ: *How did you feel when you started to teach at the university?*

LH: Well, I never thought of teaching in the university. It seemed far away and I considered that I did not have the preparation—I worked as a psychologist in Mental Health and Dr. Juan Nicolás Martínez, Director of the Department of Psychology at the UPR convinced me and brought me to the university. He always looked for something for me to do. Every time he had a project, he brought me in. I was thirty years old and very afraid of teaching; I did not know how to teach. How did I learn? Doing it. My fear made me prepare much more. Once I stood in front of the class, everything went well. For me, university professors were the most . . . and I couldn't go to class without preparing. And thinking about my professors as models was frightening . . . of being able to do it. So I prepared very well, I read what I was going to cover, I prepared large outlines that gave me security because I knew what I was going to cover and it always turned out well. With time, I never followed the outline word for word. I never fought for an increase in rank. I left the outlines behind, and the words flowed out . . .

Her Students and Disciples

Dr. Antonio Vidal, school and clinical psychologist and professor, was Letty's student, and told me:

Something unique in Letty is her speed when she talks . . . wow . . . you had to be very attentive to follow her pace! I will always remember her good sense of humor and those expressive and rough words that we all say! With her spontaneity, she did not hesitate to express those words! The jokes that she sometimes made in class and that nobody expected . . . and the funny thing is that she was the first one to enjoy them by laughing out loud. The explosions of laughter that she provoked were wonderful.

LH: They were very good students, teaching at the graduate level is easy . . . they are much more mature and you guide them less. They were responsible in responding to my requests. I remember that one day I was teaching and my voice was becoming hoarse . . . when I realize it, all of them were talking among themselves and I wanted to scare them with a test. Of course, I didn't count it for the course grade, but I think I gave them a lesson. They were not undergraduates . . . they were professionals. I was furious because I understood they had been disrespectful. All of them flunked the test. They never knew it . . . I didn't count it for grade, but that, although it wasn't pedagogical, their lack of responsibility wasn't either.

Students change, but the discipline seems to be pretty much stable, that is why local research is a must . . . because one has to be up-to-date and generate knowledge, that made me change the emphasis. Now, what I was afraid of in teaching was a matter of ethical responsibility of presenting myself as someone who masters the content and to make myself understood. What they mostly told me was to speak slower. Even in English . . . in some conferences I was asked to speak slower. Conferences on psychological measurement . . . What is the most exciting thing I've done? The classroom and the practice of measurement well done, with a sense of justice. I didn't have big discussions or terrible situations. I remember that all my life I wanted to do measurement and do it well. To develop tests and instruments for Puerto Rico that were valid. Mostly translations are used without cultural adaptations which does a lot of harm. That has been my great fight.

Department Director: I Enjoyed It!

Anyone who has been a student of Dr. Herrans will never forget the term she coined to refer to tasks that a university professor ends up doing without the pay: instead of ad honorem, its ad idiotem, in a satirical way. Many of us knew, in our time, what Letty was trying to translate from Latin. Nevertheless, she was a model of bringing back to the institution and the country what we all must: commitment and sacrifice. In the university, she held administrative positions, from which she made the history of graduate programs. But her great passion was teaching, what gave her immediate satisfaction and was certainly a more rewarding job.

LH: It was a pleasant experience . . . I don't complain too much; well, one always ends up giving much more time . . . there are no time limits. I enjoyed working on a project that gave momentum to the Graduate Program . . . The master's

and doctorate programs were approved in the academic senate under my direction. I directed the committee that drove the project . . . in the 1980s. It was a very important event, and cost a lot of work in our Department . . . Four areas didn't reach an agreement to get the Faculty to approve it was a very uphill process. They considered it necessary but at the same time laid obstacles. Milton Pabon, Political Sciences professor, may he rest in peace, helped me a lot, he was always very supportive He was a leader and militant in the Puerto Rican University Professors Association and had a futuristic vision. They were slow processes for important changes. Later, the Academic Senate, another battle . . . The senators did their job. In that moment, it was very important as the first graduate program in the Social Sciences, psychology was seen as a profession with great outlook in the labor market. The Graduate Program entailed an infusion of more professors, money for new professors, new blood, always searching for new trends . . . inbreeding is negative because the tendency is to repeat the same mistakes and it doesn't promote the search beyond what you have, it doesn't allow you to explore.

A Cultural Worker in Psychology and Students' Advocate

The variety of courses that she taught in the university at the graduate as well as undergraduate levels is impressive, which is evidence of her industriousness: Measurement of Personality, Vocational Rehabilitation (School of Social Work), Psychometrics in Counseling and Rehabilitation, Introduction to Psychology, Psychology of Development, Theories of Personality, Module on Psychological Measurement, Psychodiagnostics I–II, Introduction to the study of human behavior; Research Seminar for doctoral student, joint program Temple University and U. P. R..

LH: The variety of courses: The courses were very easy for me because my private practice gave me expertise and made you think about what is needed, not what you have, but what you need, and that is why I did many kinds of evaluations and used many instruments, without raising the price because that would guarantee more information from the evaluated individual. I taught introductory courses many times and offered courses through the consortium with Temple University.

Another important and pioneering role was to be Adjunct Professor of School Psychology of Temple University in Philadelphia. There she forged another family of colleagues and friends with whom Letty and other professors such as José Bauermeister and Joe Carroll developed the Consortium between the Graduate Program of Psychology of the UPR and the School of Education of Temple University to prepare our psychologists in school psychology at the doctoral level. Many of us who are psychologists today, were among them, including myself.

LH: Dr. Irving Hyman [QEPD] gave me the idea of the consortium with Temple and although I thought it would be hard, it wasn't. Back then, we did not have a doctoral program in the UPR; it was approved in 1986. Dr. Irving Hyman was key in the process, and I regret his departure very much, he left too soon, it was his idea. The collaboration ties and the respect between the faculty of Temple University and UPR was tremendous. We maintained a strong connection with Temple University faculty and that way other students were able to go study the doctorate there, to provide what we did not yet have in UPR. Ironically, at the beginning it was difficult because the Consortium was questioned, but afterwards we were able obtain approval for students to go finish over there. You can't set limitations for young people who want to thrive.

She directed up to eight master's theses a year, since 1969 [almost 240 theses]. One of my first contacts with supervised practice in psychology was precisely to work as administrator of the Bender Gestalt in a thesis research project to develop norms in Puerto Rico, from who today is Dr. Maribel Matos, and it was precisely Letty who trained me, in my senior undergraduate year in psychology.

LH: It was highly motivational to help student finish, so that they could publish and generate knowledge by themselves. That is our main job, not to generate knowledge by using them. I was worried, I wanted to help them finish. Many are professors and direct successful projects, and from those who I hear about and read their work I can see that they've kept their ethical principles. This is comforting. The future depends upon these young professionals.

Writing and Researching to Generate Justice

Letty Herrans also has contributed reference works including three that are university texts: *Psychology and Measurement: The development of psychological tests in Puerto Rico*, *Two Psychometric Measures for Differential Diagnosis: the drawing of the person and Bender-Gestalt*, and the second revised edition of *Psychology and Measurement* (1999).

LH: Ahh, the books . . . I dictated them, I could not write a lot, I got tired and my hands hurt, I had carpal tunnel syndrome . . . It was like giving class and I loved it. Doing what I have always done. My experience, my research articles, the EIWIN-R Project 1992 . . . it was very gratifying to contribute to build a Puerto Rican Psychology, but that is still too little . . . we only touched the tip of the iceberg . . . What I liked about the book *Two psychological models* is being able to disseminate information about two projective tests that gave a lot of weight to the anxiety indicators that could be used for a differential diagnosis—to diagnose between two conditions and rule out . . . we attributed

numerical weight to certain indicators of clinical pathology or dysfunctional behavior and this helped psychologists to make better diagnosis and offer more diverse and appropriate treatments . . . All these texts are out of print and will be published again.

Her research efforts have focused on the development of psychological measures for populations in Puerto Rico. She was Principal Investigator of the project to develop an intelligence scale to measure the cognitive functions of the Puerto Rican child (EIWN-R, Puerto Rico). That project has been the most important one carried out in the history of psychological evaluation in Puerto Rico and probably the one with the least funding. Yet, for Letty, her goals and motives transcend economic interests and with her enthusiasm, just like a Don Quixote of psychology, in 1991–1992, she embarked dozens of graduate students and colleagues from different fields in a mission, armed with much honor and a sense of social justice and culture that was, without doubt, urgent. Dr. Leida Matías, my classmate, and one of her disciples she recruited in the odyssey of 1992.

Steps that have left footprints, that have been Letty's steps. Footprints that remain intact within our intellect through knowledge shared in an altruistic way, in our illusions, through her example in dreaming and surrendering completely to make dreams no one thought possible become a reality, in our consciousness, through her example as she fights and contributes to achieve greater social justice for our own. But above all, Letty has always left footprints of friendship, sensibility, and kindness in everyone who knows her, teaching us that the true greatness of a person is in the small gestures of love that are shared with those around you. Thanks Letty, for being a great mentor, we hope that each of those who have been your students we can follow your steps with dignity.

LH: That was a great ambition . . . the whole revision, translation, and normalization project, and we were only funded by the government with an assignment of \$50,000, to provide a measure to estimate intelligence that was valid, reliable, and based on local norms. It was a great accomplishment to connect the efforts of the Puerto Rico Foundation, The Department of Education, The Department of Health, the University of Puerto Rico, the State Council on Developmental Deficiencies, Carlos Albizu University and the Psychological Corporation. But, as I told you, in general, it was only a small piece. To do all that work of pure collaboration, we needed a lot of people who worked without being properly remunerated. It was like making hearts out of intestines, to mobilize around the Island and evaluate 2,200 students, the statistician had to be paid and we still owe him, and the psychologists, the writers, we couldn't make new art with the illustrations . . . we did not have enough to pay for an artist . . . there were dozens of students, colleagues and unconditional friends like Virginia Sacarello, who edited the 200-page final manuscript of the *Manual for the Evaluator* . . . there were many committed people who gave their services with honor and satisfaction.

She has accumulated vast experiences in the practice of her profession, both in the public and private context. Dr. Herrans, with her sound expertise in the construction

of tests, was consultant in the Project to research the Department of Health of the government of Puerto Rico from 1975 to 1986. In 1987, Letty retired from her Alma Mater to pursue consulting in government agencies and to devote her wisdom to the private practice of psychology. In 1989 she became President of her Corporation for the Scientific Research and Educational Projects of Puerto Rico, Inc. and from then on she has continued with much ethics and success. From her corporation, she has given opportunities to hundreds of professionals in psychology and education to offer training and workshops across the country. Today her efforts focus on service and research on psychological evaluation such as the Project of Translation, Validation and Normalization of the Weschler Intelligence Scale for Adults (EIWA-III) of the Ponce School of Medicine and the Project to Prepare Infant, Toddler and Preschool Day Caregivers with and without developmental disabilities, sponsored by the State Council on Developmental Deficiencies.

What Moves Me and Shakes Me

LH: The work with the Corporation is another experience . . . working to get government contracts that facilitate hiring and being able to give opportunities for new talent in the area of evaluation and development to be known. I don't do it alone, I have a team that helps me constantly . . . besides, I do not know much about computers that are essential for documenting work. I am not so young anymore, I mean, I feel good, and besides I like this and it's important. Doing research to improve measurement instruments is a duty I will continue until I die.

Dr. Herrans received the Award of the Distinguished Psychologist of the Year in 1986, an important recognition, more than deserve and timely, just when she was saying farewell to the university. She held difficult and challenging positions such as the vice presidency of the Puerto Rico Examination Board of Psychologists until June of 1990 and has served as a Consultant in the Council of Higher Education. Also, as a professor she was member of the APPU. As you can see, Letty has not stopped working as a bee, nor has she stopped dreaming like a Don Quixote.

LH: I have always been very devoted to teaching and my responsibilities . . . I am very responsible and that guides me. I would like to sail a boat, I think if I could and were younger I would buy a sailboat, those adventures call me . . . but all this is a dream . . . I would try to get up on a surfboard even if I fall on my head . . . that sensation must be exciting . . . I live in front of the ocean, imagine that . . .

She also is delighted with the simple pleasures in life. She dedicates hours to pleasure reading and to challenging readings in psychology. Her inspiration comes from the breeze and the ocean smells that enter the windows of her lovely home. She lives life in the company of her inseparable and loving friend, collaborator, and colleague Jeanny. And of course, she celebrates the performance and success

of her students which is another tribute to her personal and professional trajectory. With 79 well-lived years and with life still ahead, she doesn't pay much attention to Alzheimer's, which sometimes makes her ask the same question five times.

Interconnections Among Educators' Precepts: The Nature of Teaching: A Work in Process

Hatton (2005) guided her final comments about the interviews she made to educators using suggestive phrases and I will lead mine using some of hers. For Turull making pedagogy is finding yourself and traveling towards an encounter with others who nurture you, and although the experience gives certain seniority to speak out, she considers that a teacher means to be in a permanent seeking. Another important precept for Turull is to see students as possibilities, talents to develop, positive energy and a challenge to be free of malice and prejudice. I acknowledge the dimension of talent and resilient development in Turull's conviction that in every college student there is a potential to excel. This aspect is crucial for the subsistence of the human spirit, and could be the difference between life and death, from the psychological point of view. She also pronounces the present as her context for working with each student, not their past, in order to excel and commit them to experience the success. Deep but sensible preparation, ethics, commitment with her intellectual and spiritual development are her precepts. Turull is an educator who is able to narrate and recollect her sad anecdotes in order to live a transformative present and a joyful disposition to work with students from their present and their potential. She has been a resilient student herself and this life experience brings her a broad spectrum of possibilities as an educator. She has a fierce commitment to transform lives, because in every person—as it happened to her—there is a seed that can grow and glow.

The Educational Nature of Mistakes: Valuable Lessons

For Herrans, an experienced psychologist and evaluator, her final lessons came not from texts or professional journals, but instead from young and challenging students and gratifying parents. She acknowledged that the making of a private practice in psychological testing must be enjoyable and educational. When your approaches are not having positive results for kids and yourself then you must pass the baton. Families and their philosophical views about the nontypical behavior teach you what you must redirect or rethink about your assumptions and interventions as a mental health professional. Herrans discussed that the college professor must present clearly her ideology to be honest and to recruit advocates, in her case, to generate a fair and just evaluation processes of intelligence and learning. A professor's capacity to convey and convene will transform the classroom into a life laboratory, to constantly renovate teaching and practice. Moreover, educators and practitioners must

harvest future committed practitioners which will develop and renovate the discipline. Herrans's acceptance of her fear to teach stands for a dimension of respect and admiration for the university instruction and a recognition for the importance of sound preparation. Her visionary attitude for academic projects such as liaisons with other university, the development of doctoral programs and the development of fair intelligence assessment instruments also transpire the spirit for utopias or "possible dreams."

From the perspective of a psychological exploration one can draw parallels between Herrans's and Turull's pedagogies. One can be the transformative power of an intended and critical pedagogy and the meaning of that transformation for the present and future of the practices in both psychology and curriculum. Second, that critical educators and practitioners see history as possibility and make clear commitments with the student body. Third, to maintain a high expectations profile for students while also being humble. Fourth, to calculate risks, being creative, being assertive and courageous, and to value the power of mistakes are essential tools in the baggage of excellent educators. These tools make the difference among ordinary and outstanding teachers.

To make connections among our "memorable mistakes" and our teaching development we must connect with emotions. Ada Prhabavat, a teacher for 25 years, UN interpreter in many languages, and my cousin, told me a story about her memorable lessons, which happen to be hand to hand with memorable mistakes and the power of risk taking:

During my first evaluation as an Immersion teacher of Math and Science years ago, I thought I had everything ready to "show off" to my principal what a good teacher I was! I prepared far too much for a lesson on "Our Five Senses" that I got confused myself in sequencing my "presentation" to her. No lesson plan was going to help me, I thought to myself! Then—an epiphany! My principal did not speak Spanish, the target language in the classroom . . . Aha! I decided to pack all my 25 little ones out to an outdoor Science experience. (Not planned) I gave each one a little magnifying glass, a paper and pencil, and out we went to use our senses and record with tallying. What a relief to see happy children and principal tagging along! As a result, I was evaluated on: transitioning (from classroom to outside), classroom management, making connections with the content, integration of science and math (the tallies!). And I passed with flying colors . . .

Epilogue

These interviews reveal the power of the story to influence the thinking and the personal, intimate, and professional lives of the readers. They also represent how the emotional dimension in thinking is always a trace of our filogenetic history. Genuine understanding is much more than intellectual understanding because it includes what Renate and Geoffrey Caine named as "felt meaning" (1997) and I called pedagogy in (e)motion. It is now known that the structures of the brain themselves link emotion, memory, and perception (LeDoux, 1996) which makes it humanly impossible to disconnect the subjective experience from our cultural work. The interviews also reflect the intensity of the artistic creation and the inquisitive

mind in the concept of *artscience*. This concept signifies that scientific and artistic labor embrace each other and become intertwined in education, because art is inquisitive and science is creative. It is now known that the structures of the brain themselves link emotion, memory, and perception which makes the disconnection of the subject and object of knowledge humanly impossible. The experiences of these educators have a thread that ties them tightly to the emotions that move, nurture, and diversify their academic, personal, and collective work.

Another reference is Nieto (2005) and her five core qualities of caring and committed teachers: a sense of mission; solidarity with and empathy for students; courage to question mainstream knowledge; improvisation and a passion for social justice. These five precepts are embedded in the pedagogical and psychological practices of both Turull and Herrans profiles. Their thinking about teaching and researching is an open window to revalue our mistakes and successes. The value of reflection in both educators is present in every moment of their narratives; their commitment to youth and their right to excel and evolve; their critique of linear epistemology; their devotion for advocacy and the development of a national pedagogy. Solís Jordán (2005), ex-political prisoner and colleague, in his book, written while in jail in the United States, makes us question why not make the task of documenting one that is relational, that is registered in who researches, is part of what is researched and therefore is a historical responsibility and duty. I think I was able to bring forth a very personal narrative, an “inner landscape” (in Palmer, 1998) totally necessary to recognize the value of these dedicated lives—in a different form and discipline—to educate young adults for life. I sustain the importance of making our history public, to be read from the intimacy of those who live with the purpose of contributing to a critical and sensitive ethnographic research. The narratives of educators with intense and powerful experiences reflect honesty and spiritual clarity that invites the other to be a vulnerable observer, and to enjoy it.

Notes

1. *Doña* is a title or a cultural voice of respect for experience and wise. I've always called her as Doña.
2. I contracted Valerie Cáseres, graduate student in Communications, to conduct the transcription of the recordings.
3. I want to thank Mrs. María Solla, secretary of the Curriculum and Teaching Department, and Director, Prof. Teresa Pujols, who kindly helped me find documents on Turull's biographical sketches. The documents have no author.
4. *En la brecha* by José de Diego
First part
The verbs are marked

*Oh desgraciado, si el dolor te abate,
si el cansancio tus miembros entumece;
haz como el árbol seco: Reverdece;
y como el germen enterrado: Late.*

Resurge, alienta, grita, anda, combate,
vibra, ondula, retruena, resplandece...
Haz como el río con la lluvia: ¡Crece!
y como el mar contra la roca: ¡Bate!

*De la tormenta al iracundo empuje,
no has de balar, como el cordero triste,
sino rugir, como la fiera ruge.*

¡Levántate! ¡Revuélvete! ¡Resiste!
Haz como el toro acorralado: ¡Muge!
O como el toro que no muge: ¡¡Embiste!!

5. My voice starts from the biography and continues throughout the dialogue. I used the biography to recollect Herrans' narratives.

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